

LETTERS
ON THE
SLAVE-TRADE, SLAVERY,
AND
EMANCIPATION;
WITH A
REPLY TO OBJECTIONS MADE TO THE LIBERATION
OF THE
SLAVES IN THE SPANISH COLONIES;
ADDRESSED TO
FRIENDS ON THE CONTINENT OF EUROPE,
DURING A
VISIT TO SPAIN AND PORTUGAL.

BY G. W. ALEXANDER.

LONDON:
CHARLES GILPIN, 5, BISHOPSGATE STREET;
DUNCAN AND MALCOLM, 37, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1842.

C

P R E F A C E.

THE first seven letters of the ensuing series, were written, originally, for the use of a limited circle of friends to emancipation in France, with the view of furnishing them with some of the most important facts and arguments, by which negro emancipation is recommended. They have since the writer's return to England been much enlarged, and illustrations added, in the hope of rendering them more worthy of public acceptance. The Eighth Letter, which was addressed to a Spanish gentleman, has undergone similar alterations.

TO THE
FRIENDS OF THE OPPRESSED
ON THE
CONTINENT OF EUROPE.

It has given the writer of the letters, which are now made public, heartfelt pleasure, to find in almost every place which he has visited, on the European Continent, some who sympathize with the victims of the slave-trade and slavery. At the same time, he thinks it desirable, that a larger amount of information should be generally diffused on these important subjects, particularly in countries which are implicated in the continuance of these crimes. To supply this information, to some extent, is the object of the present small publication. Although aware of his incapacity to do justice to topics of such deep importance, involving as they do, the happiness and dearest rights, with the moral and religious improvement of millions of

human beings : the writer of this little volume commends it to the reader, in the hope, that it may, in some instances, excite an interest in the cause of negro freedom, remove objections where honestly entertained, or stimulate the zeal and active exertions of the friends of emancipation.

GEORGE WILLIAM ALEXANDER.

*Stoke Newington, near London,
Eighth Month (August) 17th, 1842.*

List of books and documents on the subjects of the ensuing letters, most of which have been used as authorities for the facts contained in them.

LETTER I.

Clarkson's Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species.—*Second Edition*, 1788.

Clarkson's History of the Abolition of the African Slave Trade.—*New Edition*, 1839.

Two Pamphlets on the Foreign Slave-Trade, by the Society formed to promote the Abolition of British Colonial Slavery.

Papers on the Slave-Trade published by direction of the British Parliament. Folio, many volumes.

Buxton on the Slave-Trade.

LETTER II.

Anti-Slavery Reporter, 6 vols.

Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords on the state of the West India Colonies with the Minutes of Evidence, an Index and Appendix. Folio in two parts, 1832.

Report from the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Extinction of Slavery throughout the British Dominions with the Minutes of Evidence and General Index, 1832, Re-printed 1833, in 8vo.

Mexico in 1827, by H. G. Ward.

Harvey's Sketches of Hayti, 1827.

Brief Notices of Hayti, by J. Candler, 1842.

LETTER III.

Report of African Institution, for 1827.

Anti Slavery Reporter.

Burke's Letter to the Right Hon. Henry Dundas, one of His Majesty's principal Secretaries of State, with a sketch of a Negro Code.

Report of House of Lords' Committee, 1832.

Report of House of Commons' Committee, 1832.

Stephen's Law and Practice of Slavery.

Report of the Agency Committee of the Anti-Slavery Society, 1832.

LETTER IV.

Anti-Slavery Reporter.

Report of Parliamentary Committee on the Apprenticeship.

1. Negro Apprenticeship in the British Colonies : a Review of the Select Committee of the House of Commons, appointed to inquire into the working of the Apprenticeship System in the Colonies, the Condition of the Apprentices, and the Laws and Regulations affecting them, which have been passed, 1837.

2. Negro Apprenticeship in the British Colonies 1838.

The two last named works, and several others treating of the Abuses of the Apprenticeship, were published by the Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery in the British Colonies.

The British Emancipator.

Sturge and Harvey's West Indies in 1837.

James Williams narrative fully confirmed in the report of a Special Commission issued by the Colonial Office.

Jamaica under the Apprenticeship System by a proprietor. This extremely valuable pamphlet was at first published anonymously, but was subsequently avowed by Lord Sligo as his production.

Lord Brougham's Speech in the House of Lords on the Slave-Trade and Apprenticeship, February 20, 1838.

Speech of J. Scoble on the Apprenticeship at a public meeting at Exeter Hall, April 4, 1838 ; Marquis of Clanricarde in the chair.

Speech of E. L. Bulwer in the House of Commons, on the Apprenticeship, May 22, 1838.

Truths from the West Indies by Captain Studholme Hodgson.

LETTER V.

Papers relative to the West Indies and Mauritius, printed by direction of Parliament. Folio, many vols.

Extracts from papers printed by order of the House of Commons, relative to the West Indies ; arranged under the following heads—Progress of Industry, General Condition of Society, &c., since the 1st of August, 1838. Published by authority, 1840.

Emancipation in the West Indies ; a Six Months' Tour in the year 1837. By James A. Thome and J. Horace Kimball. *Second Edition*—*New York*, 1839.

Lord Sligo's Letter to the Marquis of Normanby, relative to the present state of Jamaica, and the measures which are rendered necessary by the refusal of the House of Assembly to transact business.

Proceedings of Anti-slavery Convention, held in London in June 1840.

Gurney's West Indies.

Extracts from the Journal of John Candler, whilst travelling in Jamaica. In two parts, 1840 and 1841.

A return of the Imports into the United Kingdom, of Sugar, Molasses, Rum, Coffee, and Cocoa, from the West Indies and

British Guiana, distinguishing each Colony, for the years 1831 to 1841, both inclusive, and distinguishing each year.

British and Foreign Anti-slavery Reporter, (a newspaper issued once a fortnight.)

LETTER VI.

Parliamentary Papers on Slave-trade.

Proceedings of Anti-slavery Convention.

British and Foreign Anti-slavery Reporter.

American Slavery as it is; Testimony of a thousand witnesses.—*New York*, 1839.

Slavery and the internal Slave-trade of the United States; being replies to questions transmitted by the Committee of the British and Foreign Anti-slavery Society, presented to the Anti-Slavery Convention held in London, June 1840.

Jay's Inquiry into the character and tendency of the American Colonization and American Anti-Slavery Societies.—*Sixth Edition*, New York, 1838.

American Almanack for 1842.

Anti-Slavery Manual, containing a collection of facts and arguments on American Slavery by the Reverend La Roy Sunderland.—*Third Edition*, New York, 1839.

Lettres sur l'Amerique du Nord, par Michel Chevalier.

De la Démocratie en Amerique par Alexis de Tocqueville.

Harriet Martineau's Travels in America.

Sturge's Visit to the United States in 1841.

Memoria Analytica a'cerca do commercio d'escravos e a'cerca dos malles de escravidão domestica, par F. L. C. B. Rio de Janeiro, 1837.

Representação d'assemblia geral constituinte e legislativa do Imperio do Brazil, sobre a escravatura, par José Bonifacio de Andrade e Silva, Rio de Janeiro, 1840.

Ensayo politico sobre la Isla de Cuba, par el Baron A. de

Humboldt, traducido par D. J. B. de V. Y. M.—*Second Edition*, Paris, 1836.

Historia fisica, politica y natural de la Isla de Cuba, par D. Ramon de la Sagra. (A splendid work now publishing.) Paris.

Los Esclavos en las colonias españolas (translated from the French original of the Countess de Merlin.) Madrid, 1841.

Mi primera pregunta; La Abolicion del Comercio de esclavos Africanos arruinará ó atrasará la agricultura Cubana? Dedicala à los hacendados de las Isla de Cuba su compatriota Jose Antonio Saco. Madrid, 1837.

Travels in the West Cuba, and Notices of Porto Rico, by David Turnbull.

Annales Coloniales et Maritimes: (a periodical work of which a portion is official, published for many years past.)

Beschouwing von den Toestand der Surinaamsche Plantagieslaven; door F. A. Kuhn, M.D. Amsterdam, 1828.

Surinaamsche Almanak.

Address to the King of Hoiland and to Governor Ryk (in Dutch) by C. A. L. Westmaas of Paramibo.

De Vrijlaling der Slaven in hare gefolgen beschouwd, en op de Nederlandsche Volkplantingen toegepast, door I de Neufville A. Z.—Amsterdam, 1841.

Het Godsdienstig Onderwijs der negerslaven en de bloei der kolonie Suriname in groot gevaar. Een beenkelijk voorval in de moglijko gevolgen beshowd, door I van Ouverkirk de Vries. Amsterdam, 1841.

Letters from the West Indies relating especially to the Danish Island of St. Croix, and the British Islands, Antigua, Barbadoes and Jamaica, by Sylvester Harvey, New York, 1838.

LETTERS VII AND VIII.

The subjects of these letters are illustrated by many of the books already quoted, besides a few others which I intend to name. It must not, however, be understood, that I subscribe to all the sentiments, contained in the whole of the works which may be noticed. I regret deeply, that there is scarcely a volume with which I am acquainted, except in the English or Dutch languages, the former of which embrace many American publications ; in which the duty of the immediate and entire abolition of slavery appears to be properly stated and enforced.

American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Reporter.

New York Emancipator, Liberator, Zion's Watchman, and other newspapers, in which the anti-slavery cause is exclusively or prominently advocated.

The Bible against Slavery, by T. Weld.

Emancipation, by William E. Channing, and other Writings on the Anti-slavery question, by the same Author.

Publications of the French Society for the Abolition of Slavery, including the Reports of Passy and De Tocqueville.

De l'esclavage des Noirs, et de la Législation Coloniale ; par Victor Schœlcher, 1833.

Des Colonies Françaises ; par Victor Schœlcher, 1842.

Esclavage et traite ; par Agénor de Gasparin, 1839.

De l'affranchissement des esclaves et de ses rapports avec la politique actuelle, pour faire suite a esclavage et traite ; par Agénor de Gasparin, 1839.

Précis de l'abolition de l'esclavage dans les colonies Anglaises. Imprimé par ordre de M. l'Amiral Baron Duperré, pair de France, Ministre Secrétaire d'état de la Marine et des Colonies. Four vols.

On the last-named work, on account of its importance, emanating as it does from authority, and being intended to

give an account of the results of emancipation in the English colonies, I will venture to make a few remarks.

To those who are acquainted with the character of the parliamentary papers, from which these volumes are principally compiled, it is well known that the authorities quoted are of very different value. The testimony of the special magistrates is in general the most worthy of confidence, as being the original source from which governors and colonial secretaries must derive the best information accessible to them. The statements of planters ought to be received, with great caution and even suspicion, when it is considered, that they have, in general, been familiarized with the excessive hours of labour and the despotic authority of slavery; besides having a deep personal interest in matters connected with the colonies. Thus the conduct of the negroes has been most unjustly traduced by this class of persons, in order to secure for themselves an extensive immigration, which many of them prefer to treating their present labourers with justice and kindness. It should be recollected in judging of evidence afforded by them, that, as in the fable of the lion and the painter, the representation is not made by an impartial hand. Were the negro to describe facts, they would appear to be very different, and more conformable with truth.

I am sorry to observe, that the French minister of marine appears to have a predilection for a coercive system; and lays an undue stress on the importance of maintaining a large export of colonial articles; an object which is trifling indeed, in importance, compared with the deliverance of the large number of slaves who now groan in bondage from severe taskmasters, and a premature death. If the prominent consideration, in terminating the present system of slavery in the French colonies, be not to do full justice to the long and cruelly injured negro; but to keep up as large a supply as possible

of sugar and coffee, it requires a very moderate knowledge of human nature, or of the annals of despotic authority, to foresee, that the measures to be adopted will prove, in a high degree vexatious to those mocked with the name of freemen or apprentices, a constant source of uneasiness to the home government, and a bitter disappointment to the friends of humanity and of the slave.

ERRATA.

Omit quotation marks in page 122.
Omit "the lives of" in the last sentence of the second paragraph.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
LETTER I.	
ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE-TRADE . . .	1
•	
LETTER II.	
ABOLITION OF SLAVERY IN FOREIGN STATES . .	19
LETTER III.	
PROGRESS OF THE ANTI-SLAVERY CAUSE IN ENGLAND	14
LETTER IV.	
THE APPRENTICESHIP	39
LETTER V.	
RESULTS OF EMANCIPATION	61
LETTER VI.	
PRESENT STATE OF SLAVERY AND THE SLAVE-TRADE IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES	110
LETTER VII.	
SUMMARY OF THE PRESENT STATE AND PROSPECTS OF THE ANTI-SLAVERY QUESTION, AND PRACTICAL REMARKS	137

LETTER VIII.

REPLY TO OBJECTIONS TO THE EMANCIPATION OF THE SLAVES IN THE SPANISH COLONIES . . .	146
--	-----

NOTE TO LETTER VIII.

ON FREE AND SLAVE LABOUR PRODUCE . . .	171
--	-----

LETTERS, &c

LETTER I.

ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE-TRADE.

Madrid, Fourth Month (April) 9th, 1842.

DEAR FRIENDS,

IN addressing you on the subject of negro emancipation, I may observe, that it is of the utmost importance, in seeking the extinction of a great moral and social evil, that its true character, extent, and bearings should be as fully as possible understood; and that we should be acquainted with the most effectual remedy which can be proposed for its removal. It is only in this way that we can possess all those motives for arduous and persevering exertions which the subject supplies; while such information is highly desirable, in order to enable us to meet the objections which may be advanced,

h

by open adversaries, or by timid friends, and to enable us to direct our energies in the manner best calculated to attain the great object which we seek. If I am not mistaken, the want of this knowledge is the circumstance to which is principally to be ascribed the long sanction of the slave-trade by civilized and professedly Christian countries; and, in the same way must we account for the continued toleration of slavery.

It is now nearly three centuries and a half, since the trade in slaves from the continent of Africa to the new world had its rise, and this revolting and wicked traffic appears to have been carried on generally, not only without a check on the part of some of the most enlightened governments of the world, but in some instances, with their decided encouragement, until within a period of about fifty years. Some good men had, however, arisen, by whom the crimes of the slave-trade and slavery were justly reprobated. Among these, Granville Sharpe is worthy of honourable mention. He may, indeed, be regarded as the first individual in England who actively exerted himself in a public manner on behalf of the hitherto neglected and shamefully injured descendants of Africa. His labours were principally directed to the removal of an abuse, which had long existed, in reference to persons who had been held

as slaves in the West Indies, and were brought to England. These were frequently forced to re-embark in vessels proceeding to the West Indies, there to endure afresh the yoke of bondage. The acute mind of Granville Sharpe, stimulated to the inquiry by his benevolent feelings, led him to doubt the legality of these proceedings. For the sole purpose of forming a correct judgment on this deeply interesting and important subject, he applied himself for several years to the study of English law. After having arrived at the conclusion, that a state of slavery is not recognized by the British constitution, and consequently that the practice which has been noticed was illegal, he undertook in the year 1772, the defence of a negro named Somerset, whom it was sought thus to re-enslave. After a long hearing of the case, which was several times adjourned, in order to afford the fullest opportunity for stating the arguments which could be advanced on either side, it was finally determined, "that as soon as a negro comes into England he becomes free." This was the earliest triumph in the contest for negro rights, and was consistently followed up by an application to the government on the part of Granville Sharpe, to abolish the slave-trade and slavery as utterly irreconcilable with the principles of the British constitution, and of the established religion of the land. The

government, however, took no notice of this appeal.

In the year 1776, the celebrated Dr. Hartley, then member for Hull, in his place in the House of Commons, brought forward a resolution, "that the slave-trade was contrary to the laws of God and the rights of man." The motion was seconded by Sir George Saville, but appears to have excited little attention. In the year 1784, Dr. Peckard, Vice Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, proposed as the subject of a Latin Essay, for which a prize was to be given, an answer to the question, "*Anne liceat Invitos in servitutem dare?*" or, "Is it right to make slaves of others against their will?" Thomas Clarkson, then a student in the University, anxious to obtain the honour of the prize, sought for such information as might best enable him to write upon the subject; and scanty as then were the materials available for such a purpose, his mind became deeply affected with the extent of human misery and crime brought under his notice. At this period, the number of slaves annually carried from Africa was about 70,000, of which one-half were transported in British vessels. The Essay which he produced was pronounced to be the best; and the gold medal was accordingly awarded to him. It was subsequently published in English with some additions, and extensively

circulated. Soon after this, he found two or three young men who entertained sentiments similar to his own, and who, with himself, formed the first association in Great Britain for the abolition of the slave-trade. At this period, Clarkson introduced the subject to Wilberforce, who was also a young man, and had recently been elected member of the House of Commons, in which assembly, he long shone as a distinguished ornament, by his great talents as an orator, and the consecration of those talents to the cause of human happiness and improvement. Wilberforce listened to the representations made to him, and promised to examine the subject. At their next interview, he avowed himself a decided friend of the abolition of the slave-trade, and advocated this righteous object with unwearied perseverance, until his efforts, nineteen years after their commencement, were crowned with success.

To this success the early and continued endeavours of Clarkson largely contributed, who undertook repeated journeys throughout England, in order to enlist the sympathies of the benevolent in the subject, and to form associations for promoting the abolition of the inhuman traffic. Poets, historians, political economists, moralists, religious writers, and some persons who had witnessed the atrocities of the slave-trade and slavery, also con-

tributed to give a just direction to public sentiment. In both Houses of the Legislature, the most distinguished statesmen and orators of different political parties united to condemn slave-trading; and the British public, especially the more reflecting portion of the community, performed their appropriate part in the struggle, by petitions to parliament in favour of its abolition. It has been estimated, that at one period no less than 300,000 persons in Great Britain renounced the use of sugar, in order to avoid giving an encouragement to the cruel and murderous system of which they so long and so earnestly sought the termination. The long delay which occurred before their just wishes were granted, is to be ascribed to the unremitting efforts of the parties interested in the traffic, the slave-traders and slave-holders, who, at that time possessed large parliamentary influence. At length, in the year 1807, under the Grenville administration, an act for the abolition of the slave-trade passed the British legislature. Denmark and the United States of America preceded England, in declaring the slave-trade unlawful. The example thus set has been followed by all the great maritime countries of Europe and America. It is, however, worthy of grave consideration, that in nearly every instance, perhaps, without a single exception, laws for the abolition of the

slave-trade have been violated to a greater or lesser extent; and for various periods of time, in all those instances, in which the motive for its continuance, supplied by the existence of slavery, remained. Notwithstanding the people of England had manifested the strongest repugnance to the traffic in human beings, and notwithstanding all her power, and fleets exerted for its suppression, this trade lingered in her colonies in the west, for years after it had been declared illegal; and in the Mauritius, until a period little short of the passing of the act for the abolition of slavery in 1833. So difficult is it to enforce just laws in distant possessions, demoralized by a vicious and criminal system.

A similar or more melancholy account might be given of the results of laws directed against the slave-trade in other slave-holding countries. It may be sufficient here to point to the continued existence of the slave-trade, on an immense scale in the Spanish West India colonies and Brazil, the former of which are supposed to import annually from 25,000 to 50,000, and the latter, not less than 60,000, probably 100,000 victims. Of the number thus landed, Sir T. F. Buxton calculates, that one-fifth perish in the seasoning during the first year; leaving the remainder to spend a life of misery in the production of the staples of the West Indies and America.

But who can tell the amount of suffering, of mortality and of crime in procuring this supply for the slave-market of the new world ! The demand for slaves in Africa, affords a constant incentive for the basest acts of treachery, and for waging extensive and desolating wars among her benighted and wretched people, sunk in deeper ignorance, degradation and guilt, by men who dishonour the name of Christians.

It was long since estimated by Clarkson,—and Buxton confirms the statement as correct at the present time, that a number of Africans, exceeding those which are landed in America, perish by the means used to procure them, during their transport to the coast, and by the dreadful sufferings and privations incident to the passage across the Atlantic, in vessels literally crowded to suffocation.

If we add to the number of slaves introduced annually into the Spanish colonies and Brazil, those who perish in connexion with this supply ; we shall find that Africa is probably despoiled every year of more than 300,000 of her children to satisfy the rapacity and avarice of monsters, rather than of men, in the new and the old world.

The insuperable difficulty of abolishing the slave-trade generally, so long as slavery exists, must, I think, be regarded as a very strong motive for

seeking the immediate termination of a system, which produces this calamitous consequence, in addition to all the other evils of which it is the parent.

I remain,

Your Friend,

G. W. ALEXANDER.

LETTER II.

, ABOLITION OF SLAVERY IN FOREIGN STATES.

Madrid, Fourth Month (April) 11th, 1842.

DEAR FRIENDS,

I RESUME the deeply interesting subject of abolition, and observe, that it might have been reasonably supposed, when the atrocities of the slave-trade were so well understood and so generally acknowledged, that some steps would have been taken to restore to the deeply injured Africans and their descendants, that liberty which was their inalienable right.

It was assuredly a solemn duty to have terminated at once a system, founded upon the most enormous wickedness, especially when to allow its continuance, involved, not only a sanction of the original crime, but the perpetration of constantly recurring and intolerable wrongs. For what is slavery? The practice of daily robbery by withholding from the labourer his just reward; it is the atrocious instrument by which reasonable and immortal beings are reduced to the level of brutes, by

depriving them of their free agency, and compelling them to toil solely under the stimulus of degrading and cruel punishments; it is a system which regards men, made in the image of God, as goods or chattels which may be bought and sold. The time past of comparative ignorance might assuredly have sufficed, in which crimes of so revolting a character had been tolerated by civilized and professedly Christian countries.

No general measure for the abolition of slavery was, however yet adopted, but the subject of negro emancipation became one of deep interest at this time to many influential persons, especially in the United States of America and in France. Societies were formed in America for the purpose of promoting this object, particularly in the northern portion of the confederation. The exertions of these societies, combined with other circumstances, among which may be mentioned the consistent efforts of the Society of Friends in that country, contributed to free this section of the republic from the crime and disgrace of slavery.

It is worthy of remark, that neither the conduct of benevolent or religious societies, nor that of individuals, in seeking the abolition of negro bondage, nor the partial emancipation which was continually taking place led to any disturbances; and it is well known, that the free states of America have subse-

quently advanced with unprecedented rapidity in population and prosperity.

In France, a Society was formed called "les Amis des Noirs" for promoting the freedom of the enslaved population in the colonies of that country, and was instrumental in procuring the passing of an act of emancipation by the French Convention in 1794. The inestimable boon was peacefully received in the two colonies in which it was granted, St. Domingo and Guadeloupe. It is indeed an absurd and futile supposition, that the bestowment of rights and happiness, is likely in any instance to lead to acts of insubordination. Disorders are only to be expected from the refusal to confer these immunities, where they are not possessed, or the attempt to force them from those by whom they are enjoyed. It is to such an act, a wicked and insane attempt to re-establish slavery in the French colonies, that is to be ascribed all the horrors, inseparable from a civil war, which took place in St. Domingo, and the loss of that fine island to the government of France, and its white proprietors. In Guadeloupe the new born plant of freedom was crushed by the hand of power, not without the loss of life to a large number of the negroes, estimated at from sixteen to twenty thousand. This deplorable event took place in the year 1802.

In some of the American republics, during their recent struggle for independence, liberty has been given to large slave populations suddenly, as in Mexico in 1829, to 800,000 bondsmen, without leading to the slightest disorder.

It appears therefore, that on many important occasions, and no contrary instance can be cited, the act of conferring freedom by law has been unattended with any disturbance, and it may be truly said, to have added greatly to the safety of the white inhabitants, for slavery has always been a fertile source of insurrections, attended with a large loss of life and property, and can never be secure from such calamities.

The circumstances connected with the abolition of slavery in the British colonies, are so peculiar and important, and throw so much light on the general character and results of slavery and emancipation, that I intend to describe them particularly in subsequent letters; especially because their history, unless I am greatly mistaken, will throw more light on the subjects of slavery and emancipation, than any other with which I am acquainted.

With sincere regard, I remain,

Your Friend,

G. W. ALEXANDER.

LETTER III.

PROGRESS OF THE ANTI-SLAVERY CAUSE IN
ENGLAND.

Madrid, Fourth Month (April) 11th, 1842.

DEAR FRIENDS,

I PROCEED to relate some of the most important circumstances which led to the emancipation of nearly seven hundred and fifty thousand slaves in eighteen colonies, belonging to Great Britain. Among these, although not established for that specific purpose, was the formation of the African Institution, in the early part of the present century. The objects to which this Society were particularly directed were, to promote civilization and commerce in Africa; and to watch over the law prohibiting British subjects from being engaged in the slave-trade. The Association continued its labours for a considerable number of years, and formed the settlement of Sierra Leone, which was subsequently made over to the English government. It was not successful to any great extent in its efforts for the improvement of Africa, owing to the continuance of the atrocious traffic in the natives of that continent by foreign countries. In promoting the effectual carrying out of the British

law for the abolition of the slave-trade, the African Institution was much more successful; and, in this respect, was productive of great good. This Society after labours, of twenty years' duration, in its last report, published in 1827, thus alludes to the intimate connexion between the slave-trade and slavery, and the guilt which is inseparable from the enslavement of our fellow-men:—"It is in slavery that the slave-trade has its origin: it is the market provided by the slave-holder which furnishes the direct incentive to all the crimes of a trade in slaves; to the murders and conflagrations which attend their capture; to the condensed horrors of the middle passage which follow it; and to the misery and desolation of a continent.

"The atrocities of the slave-trade may, it is true, practically far exceed those of slavery: yet the principle of both is identically the same; equally opposed to humanity and justice, and to every principle of the gospel; and equally indefensible on every plea of financial and commercial expediency. And who after all, will venture to affirm, that viewed in the whole range of their results, the atrocities of the slave-trade, though more palpable to observation, and striking more directly and forcibly on the senses, outweigh in the sum of misery they produce, the evils of slavery,—of a protracted and irremediable and perpetual servitude,—living through the life of the slave, and

renewed in his children and children's children, to the latest generation? Let any man think but of the perpetually impending scourge, the interminable toil to which it urges, the stocks, the blows, the contempt the degradation, the hunger, the lassitude, the disease, the agony of broken and bleeding hearts, and all the nameless and scarcely conceivable inflictions which await those, whose own destinies, and those of every endeared relative—wife, husband, child—are bound up in the will of any individual who claims them as his slaves, without any effectual, nay, any possible protection from law, against his tyranny and caprice. Let any one but think of all this, and he will perhaps see no very cogent reason for exempting the slavery which exists in our colonies, from a moral reprobation to the full as severe as we pass on the slave-trade, or for not exhibiting it alike as an outrage on every principle of justice, humanity, and true religion.”

To promote the amelioration and gradual abolition of slavery,—of this system of stupendous wickedness,—a Society was formed in England in the year 1823. Among the members of the new Society were several distinguished individuals, including some who occupied seats in parliament, and in the same year, Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton moved the following resolution in his place in the House of Commons :—

“ That the state of slavery is repugnant to the principles of the British constitution and of the Christian religion ; and that it ought to be gradually abolished throughout the British dominions, with as much expedition as may be consistent with a due regard to the well-being of the parties concerned.”

An amendment was moved by the late George Canning, then first minister of the crown, which, it will be seen pledged the House of Commons, to a considerable extent, at least, to the course contemplated in the original motion. The amendment, which was carried, was in these words:—

1. “ That it is expedient to adopt effectual and decisive measures for ameliorating the condition of the slave population in his Majesty’s dominions.

2. “ That through a determined and persevering, but judicious and temperate enforcement of such measures, this house looks forward to a progressive improvement in the character of the slave population ; such as may prepare them for a participation in those civil rights and privileges which are enjoyed by other classes of his Majesty’s subjects.

3. “ That this house is anxious for the accomplishment of this purpose at the earliest period that may be compatible with the well-being of the slaves, the safety of the colonies, and with a fair and equitable consideration of the interests of private property.”

In pursuance of these resolutions, the ministers of the crown subsequently declared it to be their intention, to introduce into the different slave colonies, the following reforms, viz :—

1. “To provide the means of education and religious instruction to the slaves.

2. “To put an end to Sunday markets.

3. “To make Sunday, instead of being to the slaves a day of labour in their provision grounds, a day of rest and religious observance.

4. “To allow the slaves equivalent time, in lieu of Sunday, for cultivating their provision grounds and for marketing.

5. “To admit the testimony of slaves under certain restrictions, in civil and criminal cases.

6. “To legalize marriage among the slaves, and to protect their conaubial rights.

7. “To prevent the separation of families by sale.

8. “To prevent the sale of slaves detached from the plantation to which they belong.

9. “To protect the slaves by law, in acquiring, possessing and transmitting property.

10. “To establish saving's banks, for the safeguard of their property.

11. “To abolish all taxes on manumission.

12. “To grant to the slaves a right of redeeming themselves, or any of their family, at a fair appraisement.

13. "To limit the power of arbitrary punishment possessed by the master and his agents, and to restrain its abuse.

14. "To provide that a regular record should be kept, and a regular return made of all arbitrary punishments by the master or his agents.

15. "To abolish entirely the practice of flogging females.

16. "To abolish entirely the use of the driving whip in the field, as a stimulus to labour.

17. "To appoint protectors of the slaves in every colony.

18. "To provide that in future no person being a proprietor of slaves, or interested in slave property, should be appointed by the crown to the offices of protector of slaves, governor, judge, fiscal, attorney-general, bishop, clergyman, or salaried teacher; and generally to any function connected with the administration of the slave-laws.

19. "To provide that, in questions involving the slavery or freedom of individuals, the presumption of law shall be in favour of freedom.

20. "To purify the administration of justice."

The measures thus recommended by the government, although supported by the authority of parliament, and the voice of the people of England, were, in many of the colonies entirely disregarded, and in all to a great extent, as will be seen by the following table :—

TABLE SHEWING IN WHAT MANNER THE PROPOSITIONS OF THE ENGLISH GOVERNMENT WERE EXECUTED.

CROWN COLONIES.	Number of Slaves.	Religious instruction.	Sunday Markets.	Observance of Sunday.	Time allowed to the Slave.	Witness.	Marriage.	Non-separation of Families.	Sale of Slaves separate from estate	Property of Slaves.	Saving Banks.	Freedom.	Purchase of freedom by slaves.	Punishment.	Register of punishments.	Punishment of women.	Use of the whip on plantations.	Slave protector.	Nomination of protectors.	Presumption in favour of liberty	Amelioration in the administration of justice.
		1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.	.....
1. Trinidad	22,500	.....	.....	p.	.....	p.	A.	p.	.....	A.	A.	A.	A.	p.	p.	A.	A.	A.	p.	A.	.....
2. Barbice	23,300	.....	.....	.....	.....	p.	p.	p.	.....	p.	p.	A.	i.	.....	.....	A.	A.	A.	p.	.....	.....
3. Cape of Good Hope	35,500	.....	A.	p.	.....	A.	A.	p.	.....	A.	A.	A.	A.	A.	p.	p.	A.	A.	p.	.....	.....
4. Demerara	74,000	.....	.....	.....	.....	p.	p.	p.	.....	p.	p.	A.	.....	.....	p.	A.	A.	A.	p.	.....	.....
5. St. Lucia	13,500	.....	.....	.....	p.	A.	A.	A.	A.	A.	A.	A.	A.	p.	p.	p.	A.	A.	p.	A.	.....
6. Honduras	2400	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	A.	A.	p.	.....	.....
7. Mauritius	80,000	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
CHARTERED COLONIES.																					
8. Antigua	32,000	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
9. Bahamas	10,000	.....	.....	.....	.....	i.	p.	p.	.....	p.	p.	A.	i.	.....	.....	.....	A.	.....	.....	.....	.....
10. Barbados	79,000	.....	A.	.....	.....	p.	p.	p.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
11. Bermuda	5,200	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
12. Dominica	15,500	.....	.....	.....	.....	i.	.....	p.	.....	i.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
13. Grenada	24,500	.....	.....	.....	.....	i.	i.	p.	.....	i.	.....	A.	.....	.....	.....	.....	i.	.....	.....	A.	.....
14. Jamaica	336,000	.....	.....	.....	.....	p.	i.	p.	.....	i.	.....	A.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
15. Montserrat	6000	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
16. Nevis	9000	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
17. St. Christopher ..	18,500	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
18. St. Vincent	23,500	.....	.....	.....	.....	i.	i.	p.	.....	i.	.....	p.	.....	.....	.....	.....	i.	.....	.....	.....	.....
19. Tobago	13,500	.....	A.	.....	.....	i.	.....	.....	.....	i.	.....	.....	.....	P.	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
20. Virgin Isles.	5400	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

Explanation of Abbreviations :—A. adopted ; P. partial adoption ; I. inefficient adoption.

The table shews that in seven crown colonies, (slaves 250,900) the regulations adopted are thirty-eight, those partially adopted thirty, and one inefficiently adopted; the blanks are seventy-one, two colonies not reporting.

In thirteen chartered colonies, (slaves 578,100) the regulations adopted are only seven, those partially adopted fourteen, and those in a still more inefficient manner, blanks in fact, sixteen. The other blanks are 224, including six colonies not reporting. Many of the regulations partially adopted, were so very partially indeed, and even of those which appear to be adopted, most are nullified by the non-adoption of other measures essential to their operation.

In the Sixth Month, (June) 1825, was published by the Anti-Slavery Society the first number of the *Anti-Slavery Reporter*, which on its appearance was limited to eight pages, and for some time appeared monthly. It was subsequently increased in size, and published more frequently when occasion required. This important periodical, containing contributions from the most able friends of the cause of that day, and of which a large part was furnished by the pen of the late Zachary Macauley, contains an invaluable fund of information and arguments on the subject to which it is devoted, and greatly promoted a general

knowledge of the cruelty and wickedness of the slave system.

In the year 1831, very important progress appears to have been made in the abolition cause in England. Five thousand four hundred and eighty-four petitions were presented to parliament, in the session commencing Tenth Month, (October) 1830, and ending on the 23rd of the Fourth Month, (April) 1831, a number far larger than had ever before been presented in one session, on any other subject of public interest. A second metropolitan Anti-Slavery Society was now formed, called the Agency Anti-Slavery Society, principally for the purpose of diffusing information on the subject of slavery by means of lectures. The doctrine of gradual abolition was renounced, and that of immediate abolition embraced by a large portion of the friends of the negro. Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, at a meeting presided over by the late Lord Suffield, after alluding to the progress of the anti-slavery cause in the country and within the walls of parliament, expresses himself thus :

“ In point of natural right and of moral privilege, the lowest negro is equal to the noble lord who now sits in the chair. Now, he might differ with government as to one point—as to the mode of operation, as to the best means of obtaining a common object. They might think that the first

step ought to be to *lighten* the chains that bind the negro slave; whereas he thought that the first step should be to *burst the chains asunder*. They might think, and might assign very plausible reasons to support their opinion, that we ought in the first place to *mitigate* the rigour of slavery, and alleviate the condition of the negro—while he thought (and it was rather reluctantly that he had been obliged to come to that decision,) that the first thing to be done, is to resort to the *eternal principles of justice*. But, if, perhaps, they might differ as to the means of attaining the ultimate object, they differed not at all (and this filled him with unspeakable satisfaction) as to the object of their common aim—the *utter extinction of slavery*,—the emancipation of every slave throughout the British dominions. To that they were pledged as deeply and decidedly as we ourselves—and most heartily did he thank them for it.”

The allusions in this speech to the duty of the immediate termination of slavery, were received with strongly marked approbation; and at the same meeting, an address to the people of Great Britain and Ireland was unanimously adopted, beseeching them to give their votes only to known anti-slavery candidates at the approaching election of members of parliament.

Towards the close of the year 1831, directions

were forwarded by government for the liberation of the whole of the crown slaves in the various colonies,—a measure which had been preceded by giving freedom to Africans taken from slave ships, who had formerly been apprenticed. These measures were productive of economical, peaceful, and happy results, as reports made to the government, and subsequently published, fully attest. The liberation of the crown slaves in one of the colonies, did not, however, take place without suggestions having been made, that they should be subjected to a modified state of freedom. To this, the colonial secretary, Lord Goderich, now Earl of Ripon, wisely objected, as he thought it better to effect “an exchange at once of all the obligations of slavery for those of freedom, so as to withdraw from them all means of support not derived from voluntary and independent labour.”

In the Eleventh Month (November) of the same year, the same distinguished person, in transmitting a new order in council to the governor of the crown colonies, notices and replies to the common objections then made to improvements in the slaveholding dependencies of Great Britain. He also adverts to the ample opportunity which had been afforded to the government and people of England, of becoming thoroughly acquainted with the slave system in the British colonies. This document is

not only deeply interesting in connexion with the history of the anti-slavery cause in England, but throws so much light upon the general characteristics of slavery and slave legislation, that I shall make extracts from it at some length.

“ In denying that the government have been floating on the tide of popular prejudice, or impelled by vague theories, I do not mean to assert that they have not adverted to those great general principles by which every wise lawgiver is directed ; on the contrary, it is because they have fixed a stedfast eye on those principles, and because they are accessible alike to all who will take the pains to study them, that I again repel the charge of ignorance which is so confidently urged. The ministers of the crown are not ignorant, that unrestrained power, must, and will be abused : they know that an unpopular law will never be executed by voluntary agency : they are assured that the natural distinctions of colour and origin, coinciding with the artificial distinctions of unlimited authority on the one hand, and absolute subjection on the other, cannot but tend to induce pride, contempt, and ill-usage : they believe that the law which makes one man the proprietor and another the property, and which delegates to the proprietary body all powers, legislative, judicial, magisterial, and domestic, cannot but be the fertile source of abuses.

“ If it be indeed true, ‘bat they who have devoted much time, in England, the study of this question, are still ignorant of its bearings, that ignorance must be admitted to be incurable. During the last eight years, every slave colony belonging to the British crown has been agitated with the discussion of these questions. Whatever light could be afforded by local experience, and whatever criticisms could be supplied by the utmost eagerness of controversy, have been brought to bear, not merely on the general principles of the orders of 1824 and 1830, but upon each of their most minute details. Several folio volumes containing the official correspondence on this subject have been printed by his Majesty’s command, and laid before both houses of parliament. It would be difficult to mention any code, the promulgation of which, was ever preceded and followed by a more severe scrutiny into its supposed errors and probable consequences. The colonists especially have enjoyed the most unlimited opportunity for explaining their own opinions, and illustrating them by evidence. The reasonings urged, and the proofs adduced by the various councils, assemblies, public meetings, and private disputants, who have participated in this controversy, have been printed at the public expense, and transmitted both in their original form and in the shape of abstracts and epitomes, to

every member of parliament, and almost to every individual who has taken a prominent part in this discussion. If this protracted debate has failed to convey to his Majesty's government the necessary information, to whom, but the colonists themselves, can that failure be attributed? And what is the assignable length of time, within which the requisite amount of knowledge could be brought together?

“ Still it will be urged, that even if the official advisers of the crown possess the information necessary to qualify them for the work in which they have engaged, the colonial legislatures have the same knowledge, at least in an equal, and probably in a much higher degree; and that, therefore, their claim to be entrusted with the preparation and original enactment of all improvements in the law of slavery, is irresistible. With the most perfect respect for the gentlemen who compose these bodies, I must venture to observe, that an exact knowledge of the particular society in which a law is to operate, is not the only qualification for a legislator. It is not the highest or the most important. For so arduous an office, it is still more requisite that the law-giver should possess the habit of dealing with large practical questions, a freedom from local and personal prejudices, an absence of all such personal interests as could warp his judgment, and a mind open to the

admission of truth in whatever direction it may come."

"The time selected for the promulgating of this order is condemned, on account of the excitement which is said to prevail at present in the West Indies, and on account of the commercial distresses by which it is asserted that the planters are driven to despair. If, indeed, these feelings are thus prevalent, no one will dispute that it is the duty of the government, as far as their power may extend, to tranquillize those who are agitated, and to animate the desponding; but these feelings, like all others, must be brought into subjection to dispassionate reason, unless it is intended that the affairs of the world shall obey the impulses of every blind and precipitate passion. If the excitement be that of a very small numerical minority, who may have surrendered their better judgment to the influence of anger or alarm, I would, with all tenderness and respect, remind them, that the times in which we are living, imperiously call for the exercise of a more firm and collected temper. But if the excitement be that of the great mass of the people; if it be founded on just grounds, and stimulated by the consciousness of their own powers; then I can perceive, in such a state of public feeling, conclusive reasons for making promptly, and with cheerfulness, those concessions which must be made at last.

“The existence of severe commercial distress amongst all classes of society connected with the West Indies, is unhappily but too evident. Yet what is the just inference from this admitted fact? Not, certainly, that the proprietary body should yield themselves to despair, and thus render the evil incurable; but rather that we should deliberately retrace the steps of that policy which has had so disastrous an issue. Without denying the concurrence of many causes towards the result which we all so much deplore, it is obvious, that the great and permanent source of that distress, which almost every page of the history of the West Indies records, is to be found in the institution of slavery. It is vain to hope for long continued prosperity in any country in which the people are not dependent on their own voluntary industry for their support; in which labour is not prompted by legitimate motives, and does not earn its natural reward; in which the land and its cultivators are habitually purchased and sold on credit; and in which the management of that property is almost invariably confided, by an absent proprietary, to resident agents or to mortgagors, who are proprietors only in name.

“It is said, that the proposed codes will virtually emancipate the slaves in the British colonies, and thus stimulate the foreign slave-trade, so that, in attempting to do good, the government will in

reality be producing the most serious evil. Where the inference is so manifestly untenable, I cannot think it worth while to debate the premises. If neither the state, nor individuals, are to do justice, without an absolute certainty as to possible consequences which are beyond their own control, the great rule of right is at an end, and every one may plead the probable injustice of another, in defence of his own deliberate wrong doing. I can never consent to oppose a temporary and apparent expediency to those eternal obligations which religion founds upon the law of God, and which morality derives from an expediency which is permanent and universal. I will not attempt to prevent the foreign slave-trade, by refusing justice to the slaves in his Majesty's dominions."

The British public had now seen the difficulty of procuring the passing of just laws in slave colonies, and I might add the impotency of the best laws introduced for the protection of slaves, in the few instances in which such laws were adopted. It was also known, that a systematic attempt existed to keep the slaves in ignorance, and to frustrate the pious efforts of persons sent from England to instruct them in the doctrines and practice of Christianity. The opposition to these efforts became indeed more determined, as the pains used to enlighten their bondsmen and to improve their

condition increased; instances occurred, in which chapels built principally for the use of the slave population were destroyed by the violence of the planters and their agents; and the missionary, in the performance of his duty was subjected to harassing persecution and the peril of his life. Added to all these circumstances, it was proved from the registration of slaves begun in 1817, as a means to prevent an illicit introduction of negroes, that there had been an immense decrease in the slave population, arising from the excess of deaths over births, amounting to about 80,000 in a population of 800,000, in a period of seventeen years.

This frightful decrease was shown to be common to nearly all the British colonies. In some of those in which the soil was most fertile, the mortality appears to have been the greatest. In British Guiana, it amounted to one-fourth of the whole slave-population; and in Trinidad to one-third, in a period of about twelve years.

Facts of the nature of those which have been described, were continually brought before the public not only by the *Anti-Slavery Reporter*, but by a variety of other publications having a similar object. Among these, two volumes describing "The law and practice of slavery," by the late James Stephen, a brother-in-law of Wilberforce, and who

as well as Zachary Macauley, had resided in the colonies, are worthy of special notice.

Public meetings were now frequently held, in which the evils of slavery were faithfully exhibited, and the just claims of the slave pleaded with persuasive eloquence, before large and attentive audiences. On these occasions, the duty of petitioning the legislature for the abolition of slavery, was prominently stated; and petitions very numerous signed were presented to successive sessions of parliament. At length, ten years after the first public meeting was held to promote the abolition of slavery, the measure for its termination was introduced by Lord Stanley, at that time colonial minister.

It has been sometimes stated, that this great act was the result of a desire on the part of the British government to ruin the whole of the West Indian colonies, including those of foreign countries, in order to increase the commerce and importance of the possessions of England in the East. The history of the struggle shows however, that the termination of colonial slavery was not a measure originating with the government, but with the people of England; and a large portion of those who took a deep interest in its success, consisted of persons in the middle class of society, men, in many instances, distinguished for their

moral worth, and hence wholly incapable of concerting an artful and ambitious scheme of policy. Principle, not expediency, was their guide: they knew that that which is dictated by moral and religious principle, is always in its results consistent with sound policy.

In bringing in the bill for the abolition of slavery, Lord Stanley thus does justice to the deep and general feeling of the people of England on this subject, and acknowledges the influence which it had exercised upon the government. "There is no one," said he, "who has seen the universal and extended expression of feeling which pervades this country, who does not know that there is throughout it, from one end to the other, a determination—a determination the more absolute and irresistible, because it is founded in that deep religious feeling—on that solemn conviction of principle, which admits of no palliative or compromise, and which has declared itself in a voice to which no minister can be deaf, and which no man who watches the signs of the times can misunderstand:—"The time has gone by when we could decide whether slavery should or should not be perpetual; the question now to be decided is, the safest, the speediest, the most effectual mode of procuring its final and entire abolition. They are mistaken who think that the deep feeling of the necessity

of the utter extinction of slavery is a feeling of yesterday—that it has grown up lately and accidentally—that it is the result of a momentary enthusiasm, which if opposed would die away; it is the same spirit which, fifty years ago, pressed upon the consideration of parliament—in spite of alleged national interests, and in defiance of any argument that could be urged upon the score of commercial or prudential considerations—the absolute necessity of interfering to procure the abolition of the trade, which supplied negroes from the coast of Africa.”

Lord Stanley proceeded to show, that the great men who advocated the abolition of the slave-trade, contemplated this measure as a preliminary step to the accomplishment of the “higher and more desirable object”—the abolition of slavery.

He afterwards quotes the language of Burke in the year 1792, in his letter to Dundas, as applicable to the recent conduct of the West Indian colonists. “I have seen, what the colonial legislatures have done; it is arrant trifling; they have done little, and that little is good for nothing, because it does not carry with it the executory principle.”

After noticing the regulations which had been sent out to the colonies by the government, in pursuance of the vote of the legislature, he states that

they were “without one single exception, unanimously rejected by every colony having a legislative assembly of its own. Not a colony, but scornfully rejected—disdainfully refused to obey the suggestions and determinations of parliament and the mother-country.”

The treatment of the slaves, as respects punishment, in one of the most important of the crown colonies, where it has been seen, that more attention was paid to the letter of the government regulations, than in the chartered colonies, is thus described :—

“ I shall disgust the house by reading the account of punishments inflicted ; but I must refer to it. I find that in 1829, when the slave population of Demerara amounted to 61,627, the number of slave punishments was 17,359. In 1830, when the population had fallen to 59,547, and when the production of sugar had increased, the number of punishments inflicted on the diminished population had increased from 17,359 to 18,324. The number of lashes inflicted was 194,744. In 1831, the population had again decreased to 58,404 ; and upon this again diminished population, the number of punishments inflicted, increased from 18,324 to 21,656 ; and the number of lashes had augmented to 199,547. Let the house bear in mind, that this is an official record of the amount of punishments inflicted by the masters upon their slaves, not in-

cluding the punishment by the judicial authorities, not including those punishments which were inflicted upon the negroes, upon reference to a magistrate, for of these I have no return to present to the house,—but this is one of the crown colonies—this is under your improved system—this is under the check of the record of punishment—this is the official return given in by the masters of the slaves themselves, as the amount of domestic irresponsible punishment inflicted under sanction of the law, by their own authority ; and which amounted, in one year to 200,000 lashes !”

The argument that the slaves were unfit for liberty, is, thus stated and confuted. “ We are told again, that the slaves at the present moment, are unfitted for the enjoyment of the blessings of freedom, that they have no domestic ties and no habits of industry, that they do not provide for their wants, and would not provide for their families,—that they have no forethought, no discretion, so that, in short, they would be totally ruined were you to throw them loose upon the world. Sir, my answer is, that by continuing them in a state of slavery, you keep them unfit for the enjoyment of freedom, that the longer you condemn them to slavery, the more you unfit them for the pursuits and relations of social life. It is slavery which debars them from acquiring industrious habits ; it is slavery

which prevents them from exercising the virtues of foresight and prudence ; it is slavery which leaves them nothing to labour for ; it is slavery which takes from them all the incentives of industrious labour, which debars them from all the ties of social intercourse ; and then you declare them to be ignorant of the duties of social life, that they have no foresight, no prudence, no discretion ; and, therefore, they must continue in a state of slavery."

I shall only quote one more passage from this justly celebrated speech—a passage of great force and beauty of language, but which is greatly lessened in its value by the few concluding words, of grave import to those whom they concerned :—
“ I propose, then, that every slave on the passing of this act, shall forthwith have the power of claiming to be put in a situation in which he shall enjoy all the privileges of a freeman, in which he shall feel no taint of his servile condition—in which he shall be freed from the atrocious system of irresponsible corporal punishment—in which he shall have the full enjoyment of his domestic ties—in which he shall not be compelled to see those that are nearest and dearest to him insulted by punishment, or liable to degradation—in which his evidence shall not be disputable in a court of justice—in which his right to property of every description shall be as undisputed as every other

class of the king's subjects—in which he shall enjoy every right and every privilege of a freeman, subject to this restriction, and to this restriction only, that he shall, for a certain time, remain under contract to labour industriously in the service of his present owner, but his then employer.”

Thus recommended, the bill for the abolition of slavery passed the several branches of the legislature, and became the law of the land.

With much regard, I remain,

Your Friend,

G. W. ALEXANDER.

LETTER IV.

THE APPRENTICESHIP.

Madrid, Fourth Month (April) 12th, 1842.

DEAR FRIENDS,

THE act for the abolition of slavery was a noble triumph for the cause of truth and religion, and should always be contemplated as an encouragement to exertion and perseverance, by those who are engaged in endeavouring to promote a righteous cause.

Like almost every thing that is human however, it had its defects. It was originally proposed,

1. "That the possession of freedom should be preceded by an anomalous state, called apprenticeship, of twelve years' duration, which was represented as a fit means of preparation for perfect liberty.

2. "That a loan of £15,000,000 should be granted to the planters; and,

3. "That the amount of this loan should be repaid by a portion of the value of the labour obtained from the apprentice during the term of apprenticeship."

† The first of these propositions, that the slave under the name of an apprentice should continue to labour

for the exclusive benefit of his master, during a large portion or the whole of his time, was strongly condemned by enlightened public opinion, and in a formal manner by those anti-slavery bodies by whom it was represented ; but the legislature sanctioned an apprenticeship, (so called,) of six years' duration in the case of the field slave, being one-half of the period originally proposed by Lord Stanley ; and of four years in that of the domestic slave.

It is due to the character of Lord Howick to state, that during the time in which he held an important post in the Colonial Office, he had become so firmly convinced of the inexpediency of any measure short of entire freedom, that he resigned the situation which he held in the government, of which his father, Earl Grey, was the head, rather than become a party to the apprenticeship scheme—an instance of virtue and decision rarely found among public men.

The grounds on which Lord Howick formed his opinion are well worthy of the most serious consideration. I shall therefore copy a few of the most important passages from his speech in reply to Lord Stanley, containing sentiments of which subsequent experience has fully confirmed the truth :—

“This is a question of which my right honourable friend has eloquently described the importance—one on which I feel to be at stake, not only the honour of this country, but the happiness or misery

of nearly 800,000 of our fellow-creatures, with the lives of many of those unoffending persons. It is also a question to which, during the last two years, my attention has been almost constantly directed—which during that period I may safely say, has occupied the larger portion of my time, and upon which I have therefore formed opinions not easily to be shaken; hence also the strong conviction on my mind is, that the adoption of any measure founded on the principles which my right honourable friend has laid down, must lead to the most fatal results. However unwillingly, I must state to the House what are the considerations which have led me to that conclusion.

“My right honourable friend has said, that he proposes at once to place the negroes almost in a state of freedom—to give them, I think, was his expression, all the essentials of freedom. Could I be persuaded that such would be the effect of the measure he has recommended, I should be spared the pain of opposing it; but the House must not allow themselves to be imposed upon by words. Slavery does not consist in a name. The real distinction between slavery and freedom is, that in a state of freedom men work because they are convinced that it is their interest to do so, because their reason is satisfied, that, comparing the privations which idleness will entail upon them, with the advantages which industry will command, it is better

for them to labour than to indulge in their natural inclination for repose. In a state of slavery, on the other hand, men work from fear, for the benefit of others. If, as I believe, this is the only distinction between a state of slavery and a state of freedom, I ask how can it be said, that my right honourable friend by his proposal, would get rid of slavery? By that plan, the negro is to be apprenticed to a master not of his own choice, and is to be compelled to enter into a contract, the terms of which he is not at liberty to reject. For that master, he is to be compelled to labour three-fourths of his day, and in return he is to receive the same supplies, the same necessaries, which the planter is at present in the habit of furnishing.

“ My right honourable friend has asked, in what respect the condition of the apprenticed negro will differ from that of a labourer in this country, who has entered into a contract to work for a particular master for a considerable period ; since, he says, the English labourer thinks himself well off if he can earn a subsistence for himself and his family. I say that the difference between the two cases, is simply, that in the one the contract is voluntary, in the other it is not ; that in the one case the labourer receives the whole, in the other only a trifling proportion of the value of his labour ; and that what my right honourable friend proposes is in effect, whatever it may be in name, a virtual retention of

the principle of slavery, the exaction by compulsion of labour, for the advantage, not of the labourer, but of the master. After my right honourable friend's eloquent description of the injustice and horrors of slavery, I think, therefore, that it was for him to have shown what advantage he supposes would arise from this apprenticeship of the negro, which I maintain to be neither more nor less than a continuance of the whole principle of slavery. Is this system intended for the benefit of the negro or the master? My right honourable friend has not very distinctly explained himself upon this point; but it is one on which it is absolutely necessary that there should be a clear understanding. Let us have no doubt or disguise on the subject; since I must enter my most decided and solemn protest against the continuance, for however short a time of any part of the existing system, with a view to the pecuniary interest of the planters. Whatever claim the master may have on this country, which is a point for future consideration, he can have none whatever on the slaves. They can have incurred no debt by having been the victims of violence and wrong; they might, perhaps, on the contrary, claim some compensation from the master for their past sufferings and unrequited services. My right honourable friend may perhaps say, that his plan is intended for the benefit of both master and slave.

If so, the way in which it is to operate for the benefit of the slave, ought to have been made more manifest. At first sight, at least, it is difficult to understand how the slave can be benefited, by giving away so large a portion of the value of his labour to one who has in justice no claim whatever upon him. I understood my right honourable friend to say, that he proposed that the negroes should be placed in this state of apprenticeship, because he did not consider that they could at present be retained in regular industry by other means, and because he believed that they would thus, before they became entirely free, acquire habits of steady exertion. He acknowledged that there is no difference between the character of the white and the black, but he said he believed that there is a very great difference between the character of slaves and those who have been brought up in freedom. He said that the effect of slavery is necessarily to teach those who have been subject to it an undue love for repose, and a more than ordinary distaste for labour, and on this account he proposed that the slaves should not at once become entirely free. But what is the cure for the comparative idleness of the slave proposed by my right honourable friend? Idleness, which he himself acknowledged to be the consequence of a system, which has taught the slave to connect with labour

no idea of the advantages resulting from it. The cure which he recommends is still in a great measure to continue the system, from which the evil has arisen."

After having shown the necessarily cruel character of slavery and the dreadful mortality incident to sugar cultivation by this species of labour, Lord Howick makes the remarks which I am about to extract further, and concludes with recommending the entire abolition of slavery, as the safest course which could be pursued:—"I have entered into these details, as I think they do prove to demonstration, the fearful consequences of the present system. Nor is my mind so much affected by the loss of life, great as it is, amounting as I have shown in a single colony, (Demerara,) to upwards of 1000 annually, as by the reflection of the long protracted torture of which these deaths are the consequence, of the hopeless and cheerless misery under which not only the actual victims, but the whole slave population are thus shown to be languishing. When I consider this, I do, indeed agree with my right honourable friend, that the system must be abolished; and it remains to be decided, whether this shall be done at once, or gradually, as my right honourable friend has proposed. He says, the question is, how the object can most safely be accomplished, and I am willing to place it upon this issue. The mode which I recommend is at once to fix a

date for the absolute and entire termination of slavery."

In another part of his speech, Lord Howick says, and how large an amount of suffering and mortality had been spared in our colonies, had the warning voice been heeded! "I know that we cannot trust the colonial assemblies to legislate for a state of things, in which the right of the planters to the gratuitous services of the labouring population shall be continued. If we were so to trust them, whatever might be the nominal effect of the laws they might pass, in reality they would amount to nothing less than the maintenance of slavery, as it now exists."

It has been already stated, that although the delusive measure of the apprenticeship was adopted, the period of its duration was fixed at a term much shorter than that proposed by its mover Lord Stanley. In connexion with this change, the loan of £15,000,000 which had been recommended was converted into a gift of £20,000,000, which sum was regarded as compensation for any loss that might arise to the planters, from the act of abolition. This alteration occasioned great dissatisfaction to many friends of the slave, not so much on account of the unjust sacrifice of money which it involved, as because it appeared to give some sanction to a doctrine which they regarded as wholly indefensible, that of a right of property in the person of their fellow-

men. It was also justly feared, that the precedent would operate injuriously on the future progress of abolition, as few countries stained with the crime of upholding slavery, were likely to possess at once the disposition and the ability to wash their hands from this abomination, at so costly a sacrifice. Besides these considerations it was confidently believed, that the abolition of slavery, so far from being an eventual loss to colonies in which this system had hitherto existed, would be the means of procuring for them a large amount of prosperity by its genial influence on population, industry, and morals, the great sources of national wealth.

It will be seen from the results which have followed emancipation, although freedom is but yet in its infancy, that the reasonable expectations which were entertained, have not been disappointed.

The proposition that the slave should be required to purchase his rightful liberty by the fruit of a portion of his earnings, met with no favour in the British parliament, and was consequently abandoned.

It has been seen from the observations of Lord Howick, that whatever pains might be taken to protect the apprentice under the new system, and considerable attention appears to have been paid to this subject in framing the abolition act, it involved at least to a considerable extent, an unre-

quited, and therefore necessarily a coerced labour. By restraining freedom of action on the part of the apprentice, and especially by securing his services to his former master, it also left a power highly dangerous in the hands of the proprietor or his agent.

It was not long before these causes were productive of numerous acts of oppression and suffering, towards those whose chains had been, at best, only partially broken. Complaints were at a very early period made to the government, on behalf of those who had so long excited the warm sympathy of the people of England, and the attention of parliament was directed to the alleged abuses.

The act for the abolition of slavery, came into operation in the West India colonies on the 1st of the Eighth Month (August) 1834. On the 28th of the Third Month, (March) 1836, a select committee of the House of Commons was appointed "to inquire into the working of the apprenticeship system in the colonies, the condition of the apprentices, and the laws and regulations affecting them which have been passed." The committee consisted of members of the government, of the opposition, of West India planters or those who represented them, and of the friends of the negro. In a report made by this committee, on the "13th August," of the same year, it is stated by them, in reference to the appren-

ticeship : " They perceive undoubtedly, many traces of those evils which are scarcely separable from a state of society confessedly defective and anomalous, and which can only be defended as one of preparation and transition. But, on the other hand, they see much reason to look forward with a confident hope to the result of this great experiment. In the evidence which they have received, they find abundant proof of the general good conduct of the apprentices, and of their willingness to work for wages, whenever they are fairly and considerately treated by their employers. It is indeed fully proved, that the labour, thus voluntarily performed by the negro, is more effective than that which was obtained from him in a state of slavery, or which is now given to his employer, during the period for which he is compelled to work as an apprentice."

Notwithstanding this very favourable testimony to the character of the apprentice population ; a testimony which throws much light on the expediency of unshackled freedom ; it was subsequently found, that both in the important island of Jamaica, to which the evidence, taken by the committee, particularly referred, and in all the other colonies, a very large amount of punishment was inflicted upon the former slaves, of which the table here furnished, affords an affecting proof.

**SUMMARY OF PUNISHMENTS INFLICTED ON THE APPRENTICED LABOURERS IN THE
BRITISH COLONIES.**

Viz., in the first five Colonies mentioned below, from the 1st of August, 1834, to the 31st of May, 1836, a period of twenty-two months; and in the other Colonies, for the terms respectively specified.—
Compiled from Parliamentary Returns.

Colonies.	Time.	No. of appren- ticed la- bourers.	Number Punished.		Total.	By flog- ging.	Average number of stripes.	Total amount of lashes.	Amount of other punish- ments.
			Males.	Females.					
Jamaica.....	22 Months	260,000	35,536	22,881	58,417	10,770	22½	242,325	47,647
Barbados	Ditto	69,000	9,930	8,120	18,050	2,467	14½	35,701	15,583
British Guiana.....	Ditto	72,000	7,691	8,530	16,230	2,668	20	53,360	13,562
Grenada.....	Ditto	21,500	2,667	2,195	4,862	672	20	13,440	4,190
St. Lucia	Ditto	10,500	1,114	767	1,881	747	19	14,193	1,134
		438,000	56,938	42,502	99,440	17,324		353,079	82,116
St. Kitts	9 Months	13,500	1,536	1,778	3,314	358	14	5,012	2,956
Nevis	Ditto	6,200	330	213	543	261	16½	4,306	232
St. Vincent	Ditto	19,300	2,021	1,861	3,882	476	22	10,472	3,406
Cape of Good Hope..	12 Months	—	814	326	1,140	—	—	—	—
Mauritius.	Ditto	45,000	10,946	3,425	14,371	7,304	18½	135,124	7,067
Montserrat	18 Months	5,000	994	602	1,596	346	19	6,574	1,100
Trinidad.....	Ditto	16,800	1,948	1,563	3,511	1,087	18½	20,169	2,424
Honduras	Ditto	1,650	35	100	135	33	27	891	102
Tortola.....	19 Months	4,200	401	287	688	250	12½	3,125	438
Dominica	20 Months	12,000	1,271	894	2,165	716	23½	20,406	1,449
Tobago.....	21 Months	9,800	1,511	952	2,463	636	12½	7,950	1,827
Bahamas	Ditto	10,200	646	453	1,099	161	7	1,127	938
		152,650	22,363	12,454	34,817	11,628		215,036	22,040
Grand total.....	.....	585,650	79,301	54,956	134,257	23,952		574,175	104,165

I add some notes and observations, extracted, together with the above table, from the Appendix to a Pamphlet, entitled *Negro Apprenticeship*,

published by the Society for the Abolition of Slavery in the British Colonies.

“ *Females Punished*—In Jamaica and Barbados, the women, as well as the men, are sentenced to the treadmill, are flogged with the cat, and it is believed, that in several of the smaller colonies the same practice is also followed. In Barbados, St. Kitts, and Dominica, women have been *sentenced* to whipping.”

“ *Other Punishments*—such as hard labour, penal gang, and to be worked in iron collars and chains—extra labour to estates—treadmill—stocks—dark cells—imprisonment—solitary confinement—imprisonment at night—fines, &c. &c., and in a multitude of cases, several of these various modes of punishment accumulated on the same individual for one offence.”

“ N.B.—No return of lashes inflicted on the treadmill is included in this statement.”

It further appears, that in several instances, the returns of punishment were not complete, and consequently, that its whole extent is not here recorded; but, we have the disclosure of the fact, that in a population of 585,650 apprentices, 79,301 males and 54,956 females were punished, in a period, varying from nine to twenty-two months; that of these 28,952 were flogged, the total amount of lashes being 574,175; besides 104,165 other punishments.

During the existence of this cruel and iniquitous system, some friends of the negro in England undertook a voyage to the West Indies, in order to see for themselves, and report to others, the actual condition of the apprentices. Joseph Sturge, John Scoble, and Thomas Harvey, were among the number of those who engaged in this humane and arduous task; and the result of the visit of Sturge and Harvey, entitled *The West Indies in 1837*, published on their return, contributed to promote a vigorous and determined effort to shorten the period of the miscalled apprenticeship. In order to procure an extensive co-operation of the friends of the negro, in this new struggle on behalf of the oppressed, another Society was formed, called the Central Negro Emancipation Committee, although the Society which had been established for promoting the abolition of British colonial slavery was still in existence. The Anti-slavery Society, after protesting against the impolicy and injustice of the apprenticeship, had hitherto, since the passing of the Abolition Act, directed its efforts to the attempt to procure an improvement in the state of the law and practice under this new form of oppression; an attempt of which the results were precisely similar to those formerly made to obtain an amelioration of slavery. The new Society in accordance with the object for which it was established,

set itself at once to seek the termination of the apprenticeship, at a period before that originally fixed by law, and almost immediately after its establishment commenced the publication of *The British Emancipator*, in which that object was advocated, and which appeared every fortnight.

Public meetings were frequently held, at many of which Joseph Sturge or John Scoble were present, and by a recital of the cruel sufferings of the apprentices, awakened a deep interest in their deliverance from the "last trace of slavery." The Anti-slavery Society, some of whose distinguished supporters had supposed, that it would be vain to attempt to induce the legislature to alter a law which it had recently made, by shortening the apprenticeship, now joined in the effort to complete the work which they had so nobly begun, and put forth an extremely valuable pamphlet, called *Negro Apprenticeship*, from which I have stated the table of punishments inserted in this letter, is borrowed. In this publication, proof is afforded of the existence of monstrous abuses under the apprenticeship, some of which were even an aggravation of slavery by the removal of indulgences which had been allowed under that atrocious system. An allusion is subsequently made, in the pamphlet I am noticing, to the very important admission contained in the report of the Parliamentary Com-

mittee on the Apprenticeship, already quoted in this letter. The following just and striking observations then occur:—"The difficulty of defending the continuance of an anomalous and intrinsically defective system beyond the period of its necessity, must be left to those who are willing to undertake it; but, that difficulty will not be diminished by the fact, that the Parliamentary Committee had distinctly before them, the satisfactory examples of Antigua and Bermuda, to prove how safely and how advantageously to both parties, the boon of unqualified freedom might have been universally bestowed. In the mean time, the most important of all facts relative to the negro race, and to the colonies, have been finally established by this adjudication; and it now stands clear from contradiction, not only that the negroes will work well for wages, but that they cannot be made to work so well without them; not only, that the negroes are industrious and obedient under a hard and unjust system, but (if proof were not really superfluous) that they will be much more so, whenever they are fairly treated. In a word, that the apprenticeship system no longer admits of justification as a necessary measure of caution; while the productive industry of the negro, and consequently, the prosperity of the colonies, is incalculably obstructed and impaired by its further con-

tinuance. Considered either as a preparatory condition for the enjoyment of perfect liberty,—or as a season of conciliation between offended parties, or as a means of improving the social and moral condition of the negroes, it has certainly proved a complete and manifest failure.

“The almost total disregard of the civil and religious education of the apprentices by the Colonial authorities, and the general injustice of the apprenticeship laws, as exhibited in the previous statement, must, until things are found to work by contraries, be regarded as demonstrative of the mischief, rather than of the advantage, of perpetuating it for such purposes. So far indeed, from its being a state of either preparation or improvement, it is plainly, one of needless deterioration and abuse,—abuse at all times inseparable from a system of unremunerated labour, but especially in colonies but just emerging from avowed slavery. If, therefore, so oppressive a condition must yet be endured, it is but just, that its real nature and object should in future be known; it ought at least to be generally understood to be, not a necessary pause in the negro’s ascending progress towards freedom, but as it is, in truth, a dilatory measure, which will be tolerated in future for the sole purpose of prolonging the unjust gains of the planter. Meanwhile, the public at large, and her Majesty’s

government, have been fully apprised of the deep sensation excited throughout the country, by the more general circulation of the Parliamentary Report on Negro Apprenticeship, the language of which, seems to have thrown a degree of doubt over the future intentions of parliament, with respect to the redress of such great and admitted grievances.

“ The Anti-slavery Committee, however, are not disposed hastily to adopt these unfavourable auguries. They have yet to be convinced, that when the case of the negroes is fairly considered as a whole, and not regarded merely in the light of individual sufferings demanding individual redress, justice will not be dealt out to the sufferers in a large and liberal manner. Of the indefeasible right of the negro indeed, to immediate and unqualified freedom, and of the expediency of fully recognizing that right at the present moment, they entertain the firmest conviction. They maintain, that such a step would be an act of national justice. They assert, that in conferring immediate freedom,—for which the most ample compensation has been already awarded,—the Imperial Parliament, so far from retracing any part of its original plan, would be merely completing it ;—would be moving directly and consistently onward, from an unsuccessful experiment, to a safe and satisfactory conclusion.

“ Neither can they admit, that any deficiency of

evidence exists to justify the postponement of such a procedure. The object sought to be obtained, is not a bill of penalties against individual offenders, but redress of the multiform evils of a confessedly defective and injurious system. In this case, as in all others, the means must be commensurate with the end; and here the evils complained of, are the essence of the system, and inseparable from its existence; and if substantial justice, which can only avail within a limited period, be the end to be secured, then they affirm, that the general proof which has been already furnished, ought to be considered satisfactory. The law of Great Britain does not require impossibilities, nor impose conditions that would nullify the object sought to be obtained. In proceeding to put down an oppressive system, it demands only sufficient evidence to prove general abuse, and a prevailing animus and tendency to mischief. The Anti-slavery Committee confidently believe, that this amount of proof has been given. Nor do they yet despair of parliamentary means being devised for surmounting those formidable obstacles, which have so long and so dishonourably obstructed the course of justice.

“Meanwhile, they have a duty to perform to the country, and to themselves, (too long, perhaps, delayed,) of presenting the substance of their case to the public; and of expressing their decided opinion,

that the union of the entire anti-slavery body is at the present moment, peculiarly desirable, for the purpose of enabling government, in the exercise of augmented powers, to vindicate the honour of the nation, and to carry into full effect the intentions of the imperial legislature. These intentions can never, in the opinion of the Anti-slavery Committee, be effectually accomplished, except by the termination of the apprenticeship system."

The justice of the heavy complaints made by the abolitionists and the general good conduct of the apprentices, were fully admitted by the Colonial Secretary, Lord Glenelg, in his place in the House of Peers. In the same assembly, these topics were dwelt upon with a nervous and indignant eloquence by Lord Brougham, who proved in the most convincing manner, the accumulated sufferings and wrongs which had been heaped upon the apprentices and their fitness for freedom. The stringent bill which was introduced by the Colonial Secretary for the purpose of preventing a repetition of the cruelties which had taken place, was indeed in itself, a clear evidence that such deeds had been perpetrated, but their future occurrence was to be prevented in a more effectual manner than that provided by the new act. The earnestness and determination with which the people of England sought the termination of the apprenticeship

system, before the time originally fixed, were successful.

A motion by which it was hoped to effect this object was indeed defeated, when first brought forward in the Commons' House of Parliament,—although supported by a large number of votes, including those of three members, who themselves possessed, or were intimately connected with those who owned, West India property.

A distinguished member of the House of Peers, Lord Sligo, a proprietor of estates in Jamaica, and who had recently filled the situation of Governor of that island, rendered a most important service, at this critical period, to the cause of emancipation. This nobleman published a pamphlet, in which he clearly set forth the misconduct of a large part of the administrators of the apprentice system in Jamaica, including the body by which they were represented, the Assembly of that island. Lord Sligo also shewed how unjust were the imputations cast upon the apprentices in asserting their want of industry, and unfitness for freedom; and urged their peaceable demeanour, good conduct under very trying circumstances, and willingness to labour, where justly treated, as reasons for bestowing upon them their rightful liberty. He also declared in his place in parliament, his determination that there should be no slaves on his estate after the

1st of August, next ensuing, as he intended, whatever might be the decision of the legislature, to give liberty to the whole of his apprentices on that day. This example was followed by a similar decision on the part of several other influential West India proprietors, whose intention, communicated in a written document signed by them, was read in the House of Commons.

A second motion for the termination of the apprenticeship, was brought forward in the Commons during the session, and in this instance carried, notwithstanding the opposition of the government.

The House was called upon for the third time to consider the subject, by Lord John Russell, who moved the rescinding of the resolution last adopted. This motion, supported by the full weight of ministerial influence, was carried; but the fiat had once gone forth, that perfect liberty should be conferred—the sense of the country had been too clearly manifested to permit the continuance of the odious system; and, hence, at the strong recommendation of the government, it was abolished by the various colonies, with one solitary exception, in which the government ordered that it should be terminated, which was accordingly done.

With sentiments of sincere regard,

I remain your friend,

G. W. ALEXANDER.

LETTER V.

RESULTS OF EMANCIPATION.

Madrid, Fourth Month (April) 1842.

DEAR FRIENDS,

THE period at which I have arrived in the history of emancipation, is one towards which the planters, and those who entertained their opinions, looked forward with very different feelings from those which animated the friends of the negro. The former, who claimed for themselves an exclusive knowledge of the character of the slave population, predicted with the greatest confidence, that the day of emancipation would be the signal for a general massacre of the white inhabitants of the colonies; that all property would be destroyed; that industry, and especially cane cultivation would cease; that the demand for British manufactures would be extinguished; that ships hitherto employed in colonial trade would rot in the harbour; and, to complete the gloomy picture; that the new freeman, entrusted with a gift of which he did not understand the use, would neglect an attention to his own wants and those of his family, and

relapse into a state of utter barbarism. The advocates of this great measure of justice on the other hand, believed, although they did not perhaps speak of future events in a manner equally positive, that the inestimable gift of freedom would be peacefully received; that it would be the commencement of a new and happy era; in which population no longer kept down by a cruel oppression, would rapidly increase; education, morality, and religion flourish to an extent which it would have been the height of folly to expect under the debasing and demoralizing influence of slavery; and a willing industry prove more profitable to the proprietor of estates than the forced, excessive, and unpaid labour of dispirited and wretched bondsmen.

While entertaining these opinions, however, it was not unforeseen by those who had advocated emancipation, that there might be some diminution of colonial produce in the first years of freedom. The late James Cropper, who was well known as a zealous and intelligent friend of the slave, in a tract published shortly before the passing of the Abolition Act, after dwelling on the permanent advantages of emancipation, thus alludes to the probable effect of that measure on the value and production of sugar, both in its earliest stage and at a subsequent period. "Besides all these permanent advantages, there would, probably, be a large

temporary profit from a reduction in the cultivation of sugar, the growth of which, might, for a few years, be brought below the increased consumption of the country, the present growth being 30,000 to 40,000 tons per annum above it. If the growth should be reduced only 20,000 tons, or to about 180,000 tons per annum, an advance of 6s. per cwt. would be very probable, and would add to the profits of the planters £1,080,000 per annum. To give such a temporary advance of price, in order to introduce the cultivation by free labour, in the West, and improve and extend it in the East, would very soon be repaid by more abundant supplies and low prices."

It will be seen in describing the results of emancipation hitherto, how far the anticipations of the planters, or of those of the friends of the negro proved to be correct.

The advent of liberty in Jamaica, the principal West India colony belonging to Great Britain, which contained 311,692 apprentices, or nearly one-half of the whole number in the British Antilles, is thus described by the late Sir Lionel Smith, at that time governor, in a letter to Lord Glenelg, Colonial Secretary, dated the "13th of August," 1838.

"The vast population of negroes in this island came into the full enjoyment of freedom on the

1st of August. The day was observed, by proclamation, as one of thanksgiving and prayer, and it is quite impossible for me to do justice to the good order, decorum, and gratitude which the whole of the population manifested on the happy occasion. Not even the irregularity of a drunken individual, though joy beamed on every countenance; it was throughout the island tempered with solemn thanksgivings to God; and the churches and chapels every where, filled with these happy people, in humble offerings of praise for the great blessing he has conferred upon them. The island has continued perfectly tranquil."

In this testimony the Governor was fully borne out by communications from the Bishop of Jamaica, the ministers of the Established Church, the missionaries of the various religious denominations throughout the island, and the whole body of the stipendiary magistrates in the various judicial districts.

The Governor of British Guiana, Henry Light, in a letter of the same date, as that quoted from the Governor of Jamaica, addresses Lord Glenelg as follows :—

"I have the most heartfelt satisfaction in announcing to your lordship the happy termination of the last trace of slavery on the 1st of August. That day was passed in thanksgiving and prayer in

every part of this extensive colony; not one instance of disorderly or offensive conduct can be adduced to throw any slur on the character of the new race of freemen; it is a proof at once of the good disposition of the negro race, and of the harmony existing between the old and new freemen of British Guiana."

Similar evidence of the peaceable manner in which the complete emancipation of 750,000 negroes took place in the various British colonies, some of them remotely situated from each other, might be extracted from the reports of their various governors or the officers presiding in them. It is an undeniable fact, as has been well observed by an able and devoted friend of the negro, John Scoble, that "the first actual day of freedom, so much and so long dreaded by the planters, passed over in devout tranquillity. The torch of the incendiary did not fire a single plantation; nor the cutlass of the negro, wielded in revenge for past wrongs, destroy a single life. That day, the negro forgot past sufferings in the fulness of his gratitude and the intensity of his joy."

This peaceful conduct has continued to the present time, and no instance is known in which the multiplied and intolerable wrongs inflicted upon the negro, during slavery and the apprenticeship, have been avenged upon the former owner or manager.

Next to the apprehension for the loss of life and property as a consequence of freedom, the anxiety of the slave-owner appears to have been directed to the prospect, which he deemed hopeless, of future cultivation ; and, especially, that voluntary industry would be given to the toilsome labour of the cane-field and the manufacture of sugar.

I shall now endeavour to state the principal circumstances which have led to the decreased export of this article that has actually taken place, and intend subsequently to notice the future prospect of supply from our late slave-possession.

I propose also to give some information relative to the present mortality, state of crime, and progress of education and religion, in the British colonies, since freedom has been established.

In the whole of the statements I am about to make, I shall confine myself to such as are supported by official documents, and shall extract some passages from the last papers presented to parliament, relative to the West Indies, in confirmation of what may be advanced.

I proceed to refer to those circumstances which have contributed to lessen the export of colonial articles since the introduction of freedom.

First among these, I shall notice the decrease which had long been taking place in the labouring population under the state of slavery, amounting to

at least 80,000, in a period of sixteen years, ending in 1834. The mortality during the apprenticeship is unknown; but from the proved severity of this form of bondage, there is much reason to believe, that the destruction of human life continued to be very considerable. It would probably be safe to estimate the whole decrease in the labouring part of the population from the period of the abolition of the slave-trade to the establishment of freedom, at 100,000, and much more, if the greatly increased proportion of children and aged persons be taken into account. But not only had slavery decimated the cultivators of the land, but under this unnatural and cruel system, an extensive deterioration had taken place in its soil, a circumstance common in countries in which slave labour has been long employed. The operation of these joint causes must have lessened the supply of the staple articles in a part, if not the whole, of our West Indian colonies, had slavery been continued; as it had already done to a very large extent in Jamaica, where the export of sugar had fallen off from 2,138,000 cwts. in 1805, to 1,431,689 cwts. in 1833, the year before the Abolition Act took effect.

If, however, there were causes of diminution in the amount of colonial produce, not attributable to the abolition of slavery, it must be granted, that there were others, most of which are, I believe, of

a temporary nature, which arose from this happy event. Under slavery, not only was the whole of the day, with a very slight and insufficient respite devoted to field labour; but the absolutely needful repose of the night was sacrificed to the manufacture of sugar, so anxious were the planters or their agents to procure the largest possible amount of this article. Women were compelled to engage in the same hard, and almost incessant labour as men, and from this cause, those who had families were unable to give their children that attention which they required; a circumstance which may partially explain the fearful decrease which took place in the slave population. Children themselves, at a very tender age, took their part in labour, education being generally neglected; and the aged were compelled to give the remains of their strength to such work as they could perform. The present interest alone appears to have occupied attention; and to this was sacrificed, not only all that was valuable in life to the slave, and even life itself, but the future agricultural and commercial prosperity of the colonies.

Can it be regretted that these elements of rapid and inevitable decay, however they may have contributed to swell the exports of sugar, should have been swept away by freedom? Human life is no longer destroyed by excessive daily, and nightly, and

hopeless toil; women become happy parents, and can at length give their infant offspring that attention which their helplessness requires, and which a mother's tenderness was intended by a merciful Creator to supply; these children are now taught the rudiments of learning, and trained to virtue and piety; and the aged negro in the decline of life, is made joyful by the possession of ease and happiness procured by British justice, which has struck off his chains, and filial piety which has more than supplied his wants.

Neither must it be forgotten, that in communities in which slavery prevails, society is divided almost entirely into two classes, the one the proprietor of the soil and his representatives, the other the numerous class of bondsmen. A middle class, consisting of shopkeepers and master tradesmen, if found at all, is only a very small fraction of such communities. On the other hand, in free countries, this portion of society, distinguished alike for industry and virtue form a large and valuable part, of the population. Among those who were lately slaves, some possessing superior talents or prudence, have already become a portion of this useful class, and find profitable employment in the supply of those new and greatly increased wants which have sprung up with the birth of freedom. The withdrawal in this way of a moderate number of

persons from more laborious employments, is an inevitable consequence of the new state of society, and one which no person who takes a comprehensive view of the sources of permanent prosperity will in any degree regret.

I am now about to notice the manner in which the planters and their agents have contributed to occasion the deficiency which has taken place in the supply of colonial produce. This they have done by refusing, in many instances, especially immediately after the introduction of freedom, to pay a rate of wages approximating to that which was given, without a murmur, during the period of slavery to free negroes; and subsequently, to the apprentice, for work performed during the time placed by law at his own disposal. This conduct led to much dissatisfaction on the part of the new freemen, and not unfrequently to a temporary cessation from labour. Subsequently wages settled extensively, at a somewhat higher rate than that originally offered, and the labourers, generally, returned to their employments.

Another source of uneasiness arose. An exorbitant rent was, in many instances, charged for a cottage and provision ground to each member of a family, capable of work, who did not give a certain number of days' labour during the week to the estate on which he was located. The sum thus demanded

in Jamaica, is stated by Lord Sligo to have been in the majority of instances which fell under his observation, 1s. 8d. per head. This was done with the view of securing the performance of work on the terms fixed by the proprietor or manager. It often, however, happened, that a larger amount of wages was offered in the same locality, but the negro now free, was unwilling to forego the opportunity of, taking his labour to the best market. Hence, forced ejectments took place to a considerable extent, and many withdrew from their former dwellings, in order to escape from injustice and coercion. It was soon felt by a large portion of the peasantry that the only manner in which they could effectually escape from these evils, was to obtain a piece of ground on which to erect a cottage, and cultivate the provisions which they had been accustomed to raise for their own use or for sale.

The large amount of money, obtained by labour, which has been expended in the purchase of land by the emancipated population, the numerous cottages, and even villages, which they have erected, and the ground around them which they have cleared and cultivated, furnish undeniable proof of the industry and energy of the new free-men. This is rendered still more satisfactory by the circumstance, that it is not unusual for those thus occupied to devote three or four days in each

week to labour on estates. It is, however, evident that a considerable amount of time must have been abstracted from the staple cultivation, while the peasantry were so extensively employed in providing for their own wants and comforts, in a manner which was only rendered needful by the folly, or worse than folly, of their former masters.

The loss of labour, incident on the dispute respecting wages, which has been noticed, took place at a critical period in sugar cultivation, the effect of which is not confined to the reduced produce of the year in which it occurred, but has exercised an unfavourable influence on subsequent years.

Among the causes of decrease in the exports from the British West Indies, since the introduction of freedom, have also been the occurrence of droughts of a very severe character, which have prevailed during a considerable portion of the time which has hitherto elapsed. These droughts have been especially felt in several of the most important colonies; including Jamaica, British Guiana, and Barbados.

The following table will shew what has been the quantity of sugar and other articles shipped to Great Britain during the last years of slavery, and under the apprenticeship and freedom; with the respective slave, apprenticed and emancipated popu-

lations, at various periods so far as they can be ascertained.

Quantities of West India Produce imported into Great Britain, from the year 1831 to 1841, both inclusive.

	Population.	Sugar.	Molasses	Rum.	Coffee.	Cocoa.
	Slaves.	Cwts.	Cwts.	Galls.	lbs.	lbs.
1831	686,000	4,103,800	323,306	7,844,157	20,030,802	1,491,947
1832		3,773,456	553,663	4,713,809	24,673,920	618,215
1833		3,646,205	686,794	5,109,975	19,008,375	2,125,656
1834	Apprentices. 540,650	3,843,976	650,366	5,112,400	22,081,490	1,360,325
1835	Free children 87,643	3,524,209	507,495	5,453,317	14,855,470	439,447
1836	Freemen in An- tigua & Bermuda.	3,601,791	526,535	4,868,168	19,903,426	1,612,304
1837	83,740	3,306,775	575,657	4,418,349	15,577,888	1,847,145
1838	Freemen.	3,520,676	638,007	4,641,216	17,583,655	2,149,637
1839	654,000	2,824,372	474,307	4,021,820	11,485,675	959,641
1840		2,214,764	424,141	3,780,979	12,797,739	2,374,301
1841		2,151,217	430,221	2,770,161	9,927,689	2,920,298

From this table it will be seen that the average quantity of sugar imported into the United Kingdom from the British West Indies, during the last three years of slavery, was 3,841,157 cwts., the average price being 27s. per cwt., total value, £5,185,561; during the three years of the apprenticeship, 3,477,592 cwts., the average price being 36s. 3d. per cwt., total value, £6,303,135; and during the first three years of freedom, 2,396,719 cwts., the average price being 49s. 2d. per cwt. total value, £5,123,125; thus showing that what the West India body have lost in quantity they have gained in price.

From the general decrease of the exports of sugar from the West India colonies, Antigua is an exception, where, notwithstanding it has suffered from droughts, there has been an increase. This is explained by the fact, that in Antigua no apprenticeship intervened to mar the happy results of freedom, and liberty has been there enjoyed four years longer than in our other western possessions in which sugar is cultivated.

I must not omit to mention a gratifying consideration, from which it may certainly be inferred that the production of sugar has not fallen off to the same extent as its export. I refer to the greatly increased consumption of nearly 700,000 emancipated labourers, who, as slaves, partook very sparingly of those sweets which they watered so plentifully with their sweat and tears, and often with their blood.

It will be seen, on reviewing the causes of the decrease in the supply of sugar from our West India colonies, that a large part of them are likely to prove of a temporary nature. There is every reason to believe, that the fatal cause of the decrease in the population, slavery, being removed, the effect has already ceased, and, in conformity with the experience of all free countries in which the means of living are abundant, a large addition to it may be expected soon to take place. In this way the

present sacrifice, in the relinquishment of unreasonable hours of toil and excessive labour, pressing upon the weaker as well as the stronger sex, will be largely repaid to those interested in plantations. Improvements in agriculture, and especially the employment to a much greater extent than heretofore of cattle instead of human beings, will probably prevent the future deterioration of the soil, and even increase its fertility where partially exhausted. It is not probable, that more than a moderate portion of the peasantry will withdraw from field labour to become artizans or tradesmen ; or, even employ themselves exclusively in raising provisions ; because in all countries in which population is scanty compared with the extent of land, and the soil well adapted for the production of valuable articles of export, it will be the interest of the great mass of the community to occupy themselves in the cultivation and manufacture of those articles.

The differences between employers and labourers, the principal causes of which have been stated, have to a great extent subsided, and there is much ground to hope, that the injury to cultivation which has arisen from this cause, will not again occur to the same extent that it has done, if it do not entirely cease. Houses once extensively built, and the lands around them cleared by the peasantry, this draw-

back on the staple cultivation is also likely to lessen. The droughts which have so long prevailed, have been recently succeeded by much more favourable weather, and it is confidently anticipated that there will be a considerable increase in the supply of sugar from our West Indian colonies, in the present year.

It will be observed, that a want of industry on the part of the negroes is not classed among the causes of the decreased export of sugar from the British West Indies, while it has been freely admitted that there has not been afforded that "continuous labour" during the day and night, which by no slow process consigned thousands and tens of thousands of wretched slaves to an untimely grave. There is much evidence to shew, that wherever the new freeman has been justly and kindly treated, he has worked willingly, and not unfrequently performed an amount of labour in a limited period, which the terror or the infliction of the cart whip could not have procured. I have already mentioned that evidence will be given of the correctness of the statements herein made, and this will be found most copious on the subject of labour, respecting which I am aware that the most erroneous reports have been circulated.

Intimately connected with the subject of labour is that of wages. If it could be shewn that the

emancipated slave was only willing to toil for an unreasonable recompense—this, it may be supposed, would prove almost as injurious to the British planter, as an absolute refusal to engage in the staple cultivation. Such a supposition would not however be correct, because the immense consumption of sugar by the people of Great Britain, being to a very great extent dependent upon the supply from our West India possessions, the wages paid to the labourer in those colonies would eventually fall almost exclusively or wholly on those who purchase it at home, in the increased price of the article.

It is indeed true, that the labourer now free, no longer receives in exchange for his toil, only such an amount of the necessaries of life as is barely sufficient, or rather insufficient, to preserve a wretched existence. The price of labour to the freeman, is regulated by the demand for it, and by its value to the employer. Hence, when labour is scarce, and large profits can be reaped from its application in a particular direction, wages may be expected to attain a high rate. Both these causes have been in operation in the British colonies since the establishment of freedom, to a considerable extent.

It may, nevertheless, be truly said, that the average price hitherto paid for labour has been moderate. In some colonies, it has not been, in a

large majority of instances, fairly remunerative ; and hence not only a change of residence on the part of the labourer from one estate to another, in order to improve his circumstances, but the inducement to emigrate to other colonies. The average price of labour at the commencement of freedom was in the different colonies named as follows :—Jamaica, 10*d.* ; Barbados, 10*d.* ; British Guiana, 1*s.* 4½*d.* ; Trinidad, 1*s.* 9*d.* ; and Antigua, 8*d.*

By the latest published accounts from the same colonies, the average rate of wages was as follows :—Jamaica, 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* per diem ; Barbados, 10*d.* ; British Guiana, 1*s.* 4½*d.* to 1*s.* 9*d.* ; Trinidad, 1*s.* 9*d.* to 2*s.* 1*d.* ; and Antigua, 10*d.* per diem.

The price paid for hired labour in the colonies already named, was in the time of slavery from half a dollar to one dollar per diem, or from 2*s.* to 4*s.* During the apprenticeship, the apprentices in their own time, when not unfairly deprived of it, received about the same amount.

I have hitherto dwelt almost exclusively on those circumstances which have afforded a pretext to interested parties, to paint the results of freedom in gloomy colours ; the decrease which has taken place in the exports of our West India colonies, and the price of labour. The results which in other respects have followed emancipation, are admitted to have been satisfactory in a very high degree.

It will not, therefore, be needful for me to do more than state them very briefly.

In considering the pecuniary consequences of freedom, it is only fair to set against the decrease in the exports, for which a full compensation has been received by the planter in the high price of sugar, in the British market—the great increase in the amount of imports.

The average value of these, as stated by Lord Stanley, in a recent speech were, “during the six years of slavery preceding the apprenticeship, £2,783,000; from 1835 to 1838,” (the time of the apprenticeship,) “£3,578,090, and in the first year of freedom, £4,002,465. It was true,” he added, “that there was a depression last year, but yet the exports amounted to £3,492,734.”

These facts are surely no mean evidence of the possession of increased means and comfort on the part of the great body of the people in our West India colonies. They are also among the many proofs of the industry of the peasantry, for it cannot admit of any doubt, that a large part of the increase which has taken place, is owing to the supply of necessaries and comforts never heretofore possessed by them, procured by voluntary labour. They also show, that the negro when freed, so far from relapsing into a state of barbarism, as naturally rises in the scale of civilization with the possession of

his just rights, as he became degraded by being deprived of them. There is much evidence, however, to show, not only that the peasantry, but that the community generally have been benefited by freedom; and that the only parties who have suffered since its introduction, are those, who by a harsh or unjust conduct, have criminally thrown away the advantages it offered.

I might cite in support of this statement, in addition to the evidence derived from the amount of exports, the greatly increased value of property, both in towns and the rural districts. In British Guiana, a colony which has suffered more from drought than any other since the introduction of freedom, and where in consequence of this circumstance and others, to which reference has been made, the exports of sugar have lessened considerably, eighteen estates have been sold subsequently to the Abolition Act coming into effect, which have realized, in almost every instance, as much as could have been obtained for them together with the slaves, during the period of slavery. Property in George Town, in the same colony, has increased in value from 8,133,070 guilders, to 9,981,560 guilders, or 1,848,490 guilders in the space of three years, between 1836 and 1839; the former year being in the time of the apprenticeship, and perfect freedom having taken place at the latter period.

Numerous facts of a similar character might be stated, proving the pecuniary and commercial advantages of freedom, in other colonies.

While the results of freedom are thus satisfactory, and may well challenge a comparison with the almost constant distress which marked the period of slavery, and was evidenced by deep complaints and almost general bankruptcy ; there has not been since freedom has taken place, an immunity from distress arising from mismanagement, failure of seasons or falling markets. Such a result cannot indeed be expected in the best regulated community, so long as human folly, rashness, vicissitude of weather, and the fluctuations of commerce shall continue. Neither must it be unnoticed, that if the great and guilty cause of a very large part of the distress, which had long existed in our colonies, has been removed by the abolition of slavery, a serious evil still prevails extensively, in confiding the management of estates, by distant proprietors, to agents. To the mismanagement, and expense naturally incident to such a system, it is to be attributed, that many properties belonging to persons resident in England, are less productive than they would be under other circumstances.

I now pass to the higher considerations connected with the results of emancipation, and may confidently state, that there prevails in the British

West India colonies at present, a security for life and property never before experienced ; of which evidence is afforded by the withdrawal of more than one-half of the troops who were formerly stationed there, and the maintenance of a very small number of police. Population is increasing ; crime has greatly diminished ; education, morality, and religion, are making rapid progress ; and an amount of peace, happiness, and contentment are to be found, probably not exceeded in any part of the globe.

Before I proceed to quote from recent parliamentary papers relative to the West Indies, passages which will be found to illustrate and confirm the statements which have been made, I may observe, that these official documents, relate to Jamaica, Barbados, Guiana, Trinidad, St. Lucia, and Antigua. It would be impossible to extract from the whole of them at such length as to convey a full representation of their contents, without occupying more space than is consistent with the plan of these letters, which is only to give general information on the subjects brought under review, with such evidence as is needful to prove its accuracy. I think it therefore best to confine myself, almost exclusively, to quotations, at some length, from the part relative to Jamaica, which will be most copious on those subjects that have been most disputed. The import-

ance of this island and the decrease in its exports, which has been actually, as well as proportionably, greater than in any other of the larger British colonies, appear to point out this course as the best and most unexceptionable. The testimony adduced will be that of the special magistrates, placed in different parts of the island, to administer the law in cases of dispute between masters and labourers, who, in consequence of the nature of their duties and their locality, have the fullest opportunity of knowing the conduct of the various classes and the state of agriculture and trade. Their testimony derives additional value from their being in general unconnected with the planting interest.

In reference to the other colonies, I shall content myself with some brief remarks, in addition to the few passages which will be extracted from the papers relating to them. In all these colonies where there are stipendiary magistrates, the evidence of these official persons is very similar to that given by the same functionaries in Jamaica. Barbados is the only island which does not possess this class of magistrates. In this colony, while more complaints are made of the peasantry than elsewhere, the state of cultivation is generally represented as "good, very good, excellent," &c. In Guiana and Trinidad, where the testimony afforded by the special magistrates is no less satisfactory than elsewhere the

planters or managers are, indeed, much dissatisfied, because they have not so large a supply of labour as they desire, at a low rate. The real causes of any difficulties which exist in these, as in all the other colonies, are to be found almost exclusively in the defects and expense of management, or a failure in seasons. It may, perhaps, be admitted, that these colonies are more likely to suffer than most others from a deficiency of labour, owing to the greater waste of life in them during the period of slavery. This disadvantage has, however, to a considerable extent been remedied, by an influx of labourers from other parts, tempted by the larger wages which the proprietors can afford, owing to the exuberant fertility of the soil. There has been a very small decrease in the exports from Trinidad, as compared with the period of slavery. In reference to crime, it is worthy of remark, that while the accounts from the rural districts are particularly satisfactory, this is not the case in some of the large towns. These, however, contain a very small proportion of the recently emancipated population.

In making extracts from the papers relative to Jamaica, I intend taking from each of the special magistrates reports, in the order in which they occur, all the most important passages having reference to the subjects which have been noticed. To these I intend to add a few extracts, which

occur a little later in the volume, on account of the clear and valuable information they contain. The evidence will be arranged under the heads of—1st, Causes of deficiency in recent crops, state of labour, future prospects of a supply of colonial articles, wages, and expense of cultivation; 2nd, Mortality; 3rd, Crime; 4th, Education; Moral and religious improvement.

1st. CAUSES OF DEFICIENCY IN RECENT CROPS ; STATE OF LABOUR ; FUTURE PROSPECTS OF A SUPPLY OF COLONIAL ARTICLES ; WAGES AND EXPENSE OF CULTIVATION.

Before proceeding to give extracts on these subjects, I may be allowed to remark, that some admissions will be found in them, which at first sight may appear to be unfavourable to negro industry, but which impression a little further observation, and a consideration of the general scope of the evidence will serve to correct. Thus in the first extract to be made, it will be seen that while “there has been no want of persons to take in the crop on the coffee properties” in the parish of St. George, it is said that “on sugar estates the want of continuous labour is severely felt.” I cannot suppose that by continuous labour is here meant, that toil almost without intermission by day or night, to which during slavery, as I have already observed in this letter, so large

an amount of premature mortality was ascribable. It may however mean an amount of labour inconsistent with the preservation of health; or with a needful attention to the cultivation of provisions, for the supply of the labourer's own wants and those of the community. But whatever may be its meaning, it is evident from the latter part of the same report, that the circumstance of this kind of labour not being given, does not arise from a want of industry, but is rather to be attributed to the peasantry being employed in "the cultivation of their own freeholds;" and for this choice an adequate reason is given. It does not, however, appear that sugar cultivation is neglected, as, in the former part of the same report, it is stated that, "The prospects of the sugar plants are very good, and there is every favourable appearance for the crops of the next, as well as those of the present year." The extracts follow:—

" Buff Bay, St. George's, 1st December, 1841.

" This parish usually very wet, has not suffered from rain this year. The spring and summer were remarkably fine, and our autumnal rains did not commence till the middle of October. The prospects of the sugar plants are very good, and there is every favourable appearance for the crops of the next, as well as those of the present, year.

“ I am glad to observe, that there has been no want of persons to take in the crop, on the coffee properties in this parish ; but on sugar estates, the want of continuous labour is severely felt. The low price of land (about three pounds sterling per acre) has induced a very great proportion of the labouring population to purchase ; and the cultivation of their own freeholds, at the present high rate of ground provisions, is very lucrative.”—
W. HEWITT.

“Parish of Port Royal, August, 1841.

“Wages continue the same, varying from one shilling to one shilling and sixpence per day on ordinary plantation work ; the picking season is the labourer’s harvest, he is then enabled for a short time to earn from two to three shillings per day, but which gradually declines to its former level, the shilling.”—H. KENT.

“Parish of St. David, 1st October, 1841.

“The crops have been got in without any trouble, the returns of coffee will prove more than an average ; and the sugar, although deficient of what was made during the pressing times of the apprenticeship, will be found to be on the increase.

“As respects the future prospects of the planter, I see no reason to despond ; only let him pursue a

conciliatory system, and all will go on well ; there is every disposition on the part of the negro to work, if treated fairly, but the present system of blending wages and rent, is the bane to the cultivation of this colony.

“Rent continues to be charged to each member of a family ; and if any of them presume to go to a neighbouring property to work, a policeman is immediately sent after them with a summons to attend at the Court House, where they are saddled with vexatious costs ; so soon as the negro learns his true position, he will remedy this by migration.”—*Ibid.*

“*Morant Bay, 4th October, 1841.*

“In my last report, which I had the honour to transmit on the 26th September, 1840, I stated that the severe drought which had prevailed nearly up to that period, and the serious injury which the cultivation of many estates had sustained thereby, had created a very general apprehension that the crop would fall infinitely below the estimate which had been previously entertained of its result. I am happy, however, now to state that the injury which was said to have been inflicted on the plants, appears not to have been extensive, and that the crop which terminated on the 1st of August, is fully one-third larger than that of last year.

“The establ'shment of independent freeholds is

progressing, and the desire to possess them prevails generally.

“In conclusion, I beg to state that active preparations have been made for the next crop, and the fine seasons which this parish has been favoured with, afford the most certain prospect of an abundant return.”—D. EWART.

“St. Andrew, 22nd October, 1841.

“The price of labour, generally, appears to be, for able workers, one shilling and sixpence sterling per day, lessening as the inability of the person may be, to one shilling. A considerable portion however, of the work of plantations, is undertaken by the piece or job, a mode which is becoming in very general use. There is no regulated charge for this description of labour, it is subject to such a variety of incidental circumstances; but I understand that the labourers frequently earn at this description of work, from three to four shillings sterling per day: this is doubtless accomplished by great bodily exertion, and could not possibly be continuous. I have not understood that any difficulty was experienced in procuring labour during the current year. I must however, observe, that until of late, the extreme dry state of the weather had almost stopped cultivation on the sugar estates, and labour was therefore in very limited demand; but I have every

reason to believe, that both the plough and manual labour are in vigorous use at this moment, throughout the sugar districts, to prepare the cane-fields for renewed cultivation, under the most propitious circumstances possible, arising from the rapid vegetation produced by delightfully refreshing rains of late.

“The quantity of produce realized upon the sugar estates this year, under the influence of such unprecedented drought, must, as a natural consequence, be very inconsiderable, and the losses sustained by many proprietors are, I believe, most severely felt, a great portion of the canes having been lost on some of the estates.

“The progress of the rural population in establishing themselves as independent settlers is undoubtedly considerable. This circumstance must, in some degree interrupt the regular supply of labour to the larger estates; but as yet I have not heard many complaints on this head, and it appears to me, that the want of capital is the greatest drawback.

“These settlements (made by the labouring population) are cultivated with much care and industry, and no ordinary degree of tact; in many instances, the sugar canes and coffee trees are to be seen in a tolerably forward state, with vegetables of every description, arrow-root and fruits in great abundance. I am not aware, however, that these new

settlers, on an average, occupy more than from two to three acres of land; which being generally of an inferior description, affords but a limited field for enterprise. It is common among them to make sufficient sugar for family use; expressing the cane juice by means of a simple wooden press, and boiling it in the common kitchen utensils.”—R. DALY.

“ *Parish of Portland, Parish Antonio,*
14th October, 1841.

“ In obedience to your circular, (that of Captain J. M. Higgenson, Secretary to the Governor,) I have the honour to report, for the information of his Excellency the Governor, that the progress of agriculture in this parish is highly satisfactory, whether we look at the result of the present year’s crop of the staple article sugar, or the preparations now making for the ensuing crop.

“ By a return now before me, the particulars of which I have obtained from the managers of estates, it appears that a great increase has taken place in this year’s crops, as compared with the last; and a much greater increase is confidently expected next year; extensive preparations for which, I observe progressing rapidly on every side.

“ It further appears, by a return of the exports from this port during the past and the present years, that the amount of the latter is double the former.

Respecting this return, which I obtained from the custom-house, I beg to observe, that a great part of the produce made in this parish is sent to Kingston, and does not appear in the amount of exports from this port; therefore the custom-house return, shewing the exports from this port, cannot be taken as a correct account of the amount of produce made in this parish.

“ The price of field labour is from one shilling and threepence per day, for able-bodied labourers; the young, aged, and weakly persons who labour, are paid lower in proportion. But almost all labour is performed in this parish by the job, or at about the following rates :—

	£.	s.	d.
Cleaning and lining the land, from 4s. to 8s. per acre, say 8s.	0	8	0
Digging into cane holes ditto	3	8	0
Throwing dung ditto	0	12	0
Planting the canes ditto	0	12	0
Cleaning and moulding the canes, from 9s. to 12s. per acre; this operation is generally required three times, say 12s.	1	16	0
Thrashing ditto, from 8s. to 10s. ditto, ditto three times, say at 10s.	1	10	0
Cutting and carrying fuel-wood for the coppers	0	10	0
Cutting, carrying, and manufacturing into sugar per hogshead of 20 cwt.	3	4	0
Cost of planting, cultivating, and manufacturing into sugar an acre of canes, supposing it to yield one acre of sugar	£12	0	0

“ An acre of ordinary land will yield on an average one hogshead and a quarter, or 25 cwt. of sugar, from ‘ plants,’ or the first crop of canes; but two-thirds at least of the cane land in cultivation on every estate are ‘ ratoons,’ or the second crop of canes, which are cultivated at the following rates :—

	£.	s.	d.
Turning trash, per acre	0	5	0
Weeding and moulding ditto	0	14	0
Cleaning ditto	0	9	0
Thrashing two times, at 10s. and 8s. ditto	0	18	0
Fuel-wood for the coppers, sufficient to boil one hogshead of sugar	0	10	0
Cutting, carrying, and manufacturing into sugar, per hogshead	3	4	0
Cost of cultivating and manufacturing into sugar an acre of ‘ ratoon’ canes, supposing it to yield one hogshead of sugar of 20 cwt.	£6	0	0

“ Allowing one acre of ‘ plant’ for every two acres of ‘ ratoons,’ every acre cultivated in this manner, on the most moderate calculation, will give on an average one hogshead of sugar; therefore the cost of a hogshead, or 20 cwt. of sugar to the planter, amounts to the sum of eight pounds.

“ And further, the planter expects, and generally realizes, a puncheon of rum from the molasses and other sweets, obtained in the course of the manufacture of every two hogsheads of sugar. The

rum is distilled by day-labour; two persons are generally employed at this work during crop. I have calculated the cost of this work on several estates, and I find that it does not exceed the sum of one pound per puncheon of ninety or one hundred and twenty gallons.

“ Labour at the above rates is easily procured, and may be had continuously, except at certain seasons, when the labourers are employed planting their ground provisions, (a description of produce that is extensively cultivated here, and great quantities of which are shipped to Falmouth and other places,) and at the holidays of Christmas, Easter, and the first day of August, which I regret to say, are, in many instances, uselessly and very improperly prolonged to lengthened periods. It is true that some managers complain of the difficulty of obtaining labour, and attribute the circumstance to indolence and the independent situation of the labourers; but I find that on other estates in their immediate neighbourhood, where the labourers are no better disposed, and equally independent, no such complaint exists. And indeed the labourers so complained of, are generally to be found exerting their industry on some neighbouring estate, owing to some real or supposed grievance which they experience at home. In short, it is my opinion that much depends on the manager; if he is himself

an industrious person, and his personal attention is directed to the property under his charge, (which in many instances is not the case, owing to various causes,) and he is supplied with the means to pay the labourers punctually and promptly, he will experience no difficulty in obtaining labour in this parish.

“The rates of hire already given, are calculated for the manner in which the cultivation of most estates are conducted in this parish; but improvement in the mode of agriculture is taking place on some properties; by using the plough to prepare the land for planting the canes, the manual labour costs only the sum of one pound per acre, instead of three pounds eight shillings, as calculated in the above scale; and by using the plough in cleaning and moulding the canes, the work is performed for the sum of four shillings and sixpence per acre, instead of from ten to twelve shillings.

“This mode of cultivation has further the advantage of completely eradicating the weeds, and the soil being more effectually loosened, the canes grow more luxuriantly; yet, with those obvious advantages, the plough is but little used in this parish. On one estate, where this mode of cultivation has been adopted, the crop this year exceeds the average of the crops for the last fourteen years; and the manager informs me, that through the

same means, he expects to extend the cultivation of the estate greatly, which he would not attempt under the old system.

“The rural population are making rapid progress in establishing themselves as small independent freeholders, and the effect of those small independent freeholders, does not appear to operate against the supply of steady labour, but is rather conducive thereto, as misunderstandings respecting rent are thereby obviated. I have an instance of the fact on the property on which I reside, the labourers located on which were ‘jobbers’ previous to the abolition of slavery; some have purchased the freeholds on which they live, whilst others pay rent for them, and there being no cultivation carried on, on the property, they leave their houses on Monday morning, and labour on some of the neighbouring estates until Friday evening, when they return to their homes. Some planters are so convinced of this fact now, that they have offered to dispose of their houses and grounds to the labourers. It is to be regretted that this plan is not generally adopted, as in some instances, the labourers have settled at an inconvenient distance from the estates.”—P. BROWN.

“*Manchester, 30th June, 1841.*”

“The principal point to which I am desirous of drawing attention, is the progress made in the

settlement of townships by the labouring population. Exclusive of various small establishments, there are now at least seven villages deserving of that appellation. The number of people located in each, I will not attempt to estimate ; but it must be matter of regret, as I have previously stated, that no legislative enactment exists, to aid in the accomplishment of a proper knowledge of their numbers.

“ Yet I think I am within bounds, when I state, that one-half the families formerly attached to plantations in this parish, have a direct interest in the small freeholds to which I now refer. The demand for small lots of land still continues. The payment for these lots are made in cash, and the prices appear to be gradually increasing. Under these circumstances, it would have been but reasonable to apprehend, that not only the whole of the labour of those who had already purchased should have been withdrawn from the large plantation ; but that they should, judging from the rapid advancement of their buildings and plantations, have induced other labourers who could not afford to buy, to give their labour for hire to their former fellow-slaves.

“ It may be useful and interesting to inquire, whether this has been the fact or not ; I believe not. But while I express this opinion, I must admit, that in certain districts in which the sale of land

has unfortunately been opposed, a deficiency of labour has prevailed. But generally on properties, as far as my observation will enable me to judge, (and I have used my exertions to ascertain the truth,) labour is progressing satisfactorily, where prompt payment and proper arrangements can be effected.

“Experienced planters well know the difficulties, and labour, and privations, and great expense of establishing plantations from the woods. They know the misery of dependence on pathways for the conveyance of their supplies. They know the primary difficulties of maintaining animals to aid in their labours and promote their comforts, and they can well estimate the expense of forming proper roads. Such difficulties as these, and many others which I might enumerate, have been encountered by the mass of the people of this parish.

“It would appear wonderful to those whose knowledge of the physical power of the negro is only confined to his unremunerated specimens of labour during slavery and apprenticeship, how so much could have been accomplished on the small lot of land in building, planting, digging ponds, and making fences, as has been done without entailing an entire cessation of labour on the plantations of the larger proprietors. Certainly this has not been the result—and why? I humbly submit for con-

sideration the reason: it is because his emancipation from bondage, his new hopes, his new desires, his new responsibilities, in short, his newly-born ambition stimulates him to exertions, of which those who formerly knew the ' negro character,' believed him incapable. His bodily powers, by the application of a money power, are multiplied beyond calculation. He can now labour on his own plantation, and spare time to labour on the plantations of others, and for the establishment of this assertion, I confidently appeal to those who know the real state of the old plantations of Manchester.

" I now refer to a former opinion which I ventured to state, that labour in the neighbourhood of established townships is cheaper than elsewhere. That opinion, speaking from further experience, appears to be correct. But I will now go further and state, that labour may be obtained at reasonable prices from townships, but partially established. How does this arise? I think the reason sufficiently obvious. The desire to become independent in location (from causes which it has happily become, in a majority of instances, needless to trace) predominates to such a degree, that many who can save money enough to pay for the small lots of land, exhaust their funds in doing so. Others, richer perhaps, find the expense of building, planting, &c., or, in other words, of maintain-

ing themselves by the expenditure of money during the process, beyond their previous computation. They, therefore, are compelled to seek the means of subsistence, or of the completion of their houses, &c. by an offer of their labour to those who fortunately have the means of remunerating them in money. If in this early stage such a fact can be established, what great ground is there for the encouragement of the timid capitalist, to expect that there will annually be an increasing supply of labour for the cultivation, and even the extension of the cultivation of the country. Add to this the certainty, that under such a system the population must increase most rapidly: the knowledge that the bodily power of each person who was formerly known as a slave, has already increased wonderfully, and then, I think, no alarm need spread about the insufficiency of labour to carry on the cultivation, if sufficient capital can be found to encourage the labourers in their present peaceable and obedient course, and to protect them from the ills and corruption which an absence of honest encouragement might entail.

“ The parish is happily relieved by beautiful rains. The crops of coffee will not, as far as my information leads me to expect, be very large, but considerably larger than they have been for the last three years. The extension of new plants has

been greater than I could, without a minute inspection of the new townships, have anticipated; certainly they are much greater than I, in my last dispatch, supposed.

“ Number of tax payers in the parish of Manchester, in the year			
1836	.	.	387
“ 1837	.	.	393
“ 1838	.	.	438
In the year (no taxes) 1839 not given in.			
“ 1840	.	.	1321
“ 1841	.	.	1866

“ C. M. INGRAM, Clerk of the Vestry.”—
J. GRANT.

“ *Alley Vere, 7th October, 1841.*

“ The rent question, which caused so much bickering and animosity between landlord and tenant is now happily at rest, and a good feeling generally exists between all parties.”—B. MAHON.

“ *St. John's, 8th October, 1841.*

“ In conclusion, I beg to state, that numerous small settlements are rising on all sides, which has already given the face of the country a more cheerful and populated appearance; and I have no reason to think these settlers have withdrawn their labour from the cultivation of the staples of the island: indeed I am aware these persons do give their

surplus time, after the cultivation of their provision grounds, where they can find the nearest and best market."—P. REILLY.

MORTALITY.

I think it desirable under this head again to make one or two remarks. I cannot but regret that little positive information on the progress of population in Jamaica, is contained in the documents from which I quote. From what has been stated of the circumstances of the peasantry in that island, no reasonable doubt can however be entertained, that an increase has already taken place, instead of a considerable decrease, in the labouring portion of the community; a conclusion which derives much confirmation from the fact that, during the period of slavery, the free blacks rapidly augmented in number in all our West India colonies, whilst a frightful mortality occurred among those who were held in bondage. I give extracts from the papers relative to Guiana, Trinidad, and St. Lucia, on the subject of population, which are highly satisfactory. From the situation of Jamaica, and its greater salubrity than either Guiana or Trinidad, results no less favourable may be safely stated to exist in that island.

“ Half-yearly report, ending the 30th of June, 1841, from district A, in the county of Demerara.

“The rate of mortality has been about one-third less since the dissolution of the apprenticeship.”—
THOMAS COLEMAN.

Trinidad.—District of North Naparima, 1st July, 1841.

“It is impossible to state with any degree of accuracy the rate of mortality, from the want of statistical returns; but it is evident to every observer, that it has considerably decreased since the expiration of the apprenticeship.”—C. F. KNOX.

St. Lucia.—Third district. Note des baptêmes, mariages, et décès de la paroisse, Notre Dame, de l'Assomption, de la Sonfrière, depuis Janvier 1841, jusqu' au Octobre 1.

Baptêmes	192
Mariages	17
Décès de grandes personnes	42
Décès d'enfans.....	10

CHARES BENNET.

CRIME.

“*Parish of St. David's, 1st October, 1841.*

“Crimes of a serious nature do not prevail among the emancipated class; instances will occur of petty thefts, and such like offences, which will diminish as education diffuses itself.”—H. KENT.

“*St. Andrew, 22nd October, 1841.*

“Crime, I am happy to state, is on the decrease, and is confined to the minor degrees.”—R. DALY.

*“ Parish of Portland, Parish Antonio,
“ 14th October, 1841.*

“ With reference to the state of crime, the return I had the honour of transmitting to your department last month, exhibiting the number of persons convicted at each court of quarter session, held in this parish since the termination of the apprenticeship system, also their offences and punishments, shows a decrease in crime since that period, as vide the following summary :—

“ Year ending 31st August, 1839, 17 convictions.

“ 1840, 21 “

“ 1841, 15 “

PETER BROWN.

“ Savannah la Mar, 8th June, 1841.

“ When we reflect that out of a population estimated in the year 1840, at upwards of 20,000, the greatest number of convictions for larceny at any quarter sessions for the last two years was seven, and of persons tried, nine ; we cannot but commend our peasantry, nor can we in justice withhold from their character the meed of praise in this respect.”

—THOMAS ABBOTT.

“ Manchester, October, 1841.

“ With reference to the state of crime, the return which I have lately had the honour of transmitting, shows an increase applicable to the general popu-

lation. I cannot, however, consider, that in a population of 25,000, twenty-three convictions in a quarter sessions, for every description of offence in one year affords any just grounds for alarm.”—
J. GRANT.

“ *Alley Vere, 7th October, 1841.*

“ Crime we scarcely have, very little that is made either the subject of summary or sessional adjudication; and I will venture to assert there is not a peasantry in the world better conducted, more civil, or more orderly in their demeanour, than those in Vere.”—B. MAHON.

EDUCATION; MORAL AND RELIGIOUS IMPROVEMENT.

On the latter subject I find under this head little information respecting Jamaica in the parliamentary papers before me, and an account by no means copious in those relating to the other colonies. It is however well known, both from the testimony of intelligent and highly respectable travellers, as well as from the reports made to various religious societies in England, by the missionaries in the West Indies, that a very great increase in the number of marriages, and a most gratifying improvement in the moral and religious state of the population, has taken place in all our colonies, since the last traces of slavery have been removed by the termination of the apprenticeship. In the absence of information relative to

Jamaica, on these subjects, in the papers to which I confine myself, I propose again to quote two or three extracts from statements made in these documents respecting other colonies.

“ Morant Bay, 4th October, 1841.

“ There are many schools in this parish, and the advantages of education are still sought after by the peasantry.”—D. EWART.

“ St. Andrew, 22nd October, 1841.

“ Education among the children in the rural districts appears to be forwarded by the establishment of about thirteen schools, distributed to suit the convenience of this class of persons; six of the schools are, I believe, under the control of the Lord Bishop and vestry, the remainder are under the different dissenting ministers, and the London Missionary Society. I understand that these schools are all well attended.”—R. DALY.

*“ Parish of Portland, Parish Antonio,
“ October 14th, 1841.*

“ By the recent arrival of the Rev. Mr. Ward, a Baptist minister, who has opened no fewer than four schools in this parish, the means of instruction has been considerably extended. Sunday schools are conducted by the several denominations of religionists in their respective places of worship. To these, a considerable portion of the adult population

resort, and are instructed in their civil duties and moral obligations, as well as in a knowledge of letters."—PETER BROWN.

"St. John's, October 8th, 1841.

"Great anxiety is generally shown by all classes of the peasantry to have their children educated, and where opportunities are afforded, they gladly avail themselves of them, to enable their offspring to enjoy a blessing of which most of them keenly feel the want, and of which their own situation in early life debarred them from partaking. With this feeling so universal, I regret that more opportunities are not within their reach ; but as a great improvement in this respect has taken place within the last few years, it is to be hoped it will continue to increase, and that the first generation of Jamaica freemen will at least have the opportunity of universal education."—P. O'REILLY.

"British Guiana.—Half-yearly report, ending the 30th of June, 1841, from District A. in the county of Demerara.

"There is evidently a change for the better in their (speaking of the peasantry) manners, habits and tastes, and a laudable ambition to progress ; marriage has become general, the female character elevated, and their attendance at the churches and chapels very respectable ; and their attendance at the latter very numerous."—H. STRUTT.

“ *St. Lucia*.—Second District, Sept. 20th, 1841.

“ Marriage has become more frequent, and is indeed now considered by most of the labourers as adding greatly to their respectability, and as being essential to their domestic comfort and tranquillity.”

—JAMES O'DRYSDALE.

“ Fifth District, Sept. 17th, 1841.

“ There has been a progressive improvement in the general character and condition of the peasantry, since the dissolution of the apprenticeship ; marriage formerly but little known among them, is now a common occurrence, and the greatest number of marriages that have taken place, have been between those who had been cohabiting together, and many of them with a numerous offspring.”—JAMES JOHNSTONE.

I shall close these quotations with observing, that in Antigua it appears from the statement of William Walker, who with the whole of the persons whose testimony has been advanced, holds the office of stipendiary magistrate, that the number of marriages in that island were during the last six years of slavery, commencing with 1828, “ 29, 27, 46, 44, 56, and 89 ; and since the introduction of freedom, 202, 476, 329, 246, 316, 468, and 554.”

I have omitted in the statements hitherto made, to remark particularly on the results of emancipation in Mauritius and at the Cape of Good Hope. They may be stated to resemble to a considerable

extent those which have occurred in the West India colonies. There has, indeed, been a decided increase in the export of sugar from Mauritius; but as this has been apparently obtained by the introduction of Indian labourers, who work under indenture, a system necessarily attended with much abuse, in a country just emerging from slavery, I notice it with no satisfaction.

The cheering and highly satisfactory results of emancipation in the British colonies, have now been described, and I hope established by evidence. While I feel that I have portrayed imperfectly indeed these great results, it has, I think, been clearly manifested, how completely the gloomy and confident predictions of the British planters have been falsified by events, since freedom has been conferred. I do not hesitate to express my conviction; grounded not alone on reasoning, however sound and conclusive; but, on ample experience derived from the great experiment which has been made; that equally false, so far as the negroes are concerned, will be the evil forebodings of the planters of every other land in which liberty shall be given—forebodings which have no other base than guilty fear, insatiable avarice, or pitiable ignorance and prejudice.

I remain, &c.,

G. W. ALEXANDER.

LETTER VI.

PRESENT STATE OF SLAVERY AND THE SLAVE-TRADE
IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

Madrid, Fourth Month (April) 13th, 1842.

DEAR FRIENDS,

IN the preceding letters I have dwelt more particularly, than I should otherwise have done, upon the circumstances which took place under slavery and the apprenticeship in the colonies of Great Britain, because in no other country, so far as my knowledge extends, is an equal amount of information, relative to such subjects to be found in public documents; and because they afford a strong presumption of the universal character of a system of coerced labour. The natural disposition of man is everywhere the same, and will generally be found to lead to a similar conduct in persons alike circumstanced.

Slavery is everywhere destructive to virtue and humanity, and the difference in degree is too small to be worthy of serious notice, except where there is a disposition to call the existence of the fact into question.

If I am not mistaken the truth of this remark

will be seen in the practice of slavery wherever it exists.

A knowledge of the practice of slavery will also show, that an alleged superiority in the condition of slaves in those countries in which the slave laws have been stated to be milder than were those of England; although in reality greatly inferior to the provisions of the apprenticeship; is not founded in fact.

I proceed to state that slavery is spread over a large space in the northern and southern part of the continent of America, as well as among numerous islands of the West Indies.

In the United States of America are two millions and a-half of slaves, condemned by law and practice to a debasing ignorance, lest they should become acquainted with their rights and dare to assert them, so timid is guilt, and so naturally does the commission of one crime lead to the perpetration of another. There are states in the North American union where, incredible as it may appear, teaching the slave to read is punishable with death.

There is, however, one peculiarity in the circumstances of slavery in the United States, from which it might be supposed, that it exists in that country in a milder form than elsewhere. A considerable natural increase has taken place among the

slaves, amounting^o to half a million, in a number of two millions, in the interval of ten years, between 1830 and 1840. That the slaves have not decreased in the United States, might perhaps be accounted for to a considerable extent, by the fact, that a very large proportion of the bondsmen in that country are occupied in the cultivation of cotton, an employment which appears to have been far less fatal to the slaves in our own colonies than the work on sugar plantations. Thus at the period when a dreadful mortality took place in the slave-population of Demerara, a great part of whom were engaged in the cultivation and manufacture of sugar, an increase of a little more than one per cent. occurred on the cotton estates in that colony. There are, however, sugar plantations to no very inconsiderable extent in Louisiana, and on these, in conformity with those results, which are generally found to follow, where slave labour is applied to the production of sugar, a large number of deaths is known to take place. How, then, is the increase in the number of slaves in the United States to be accounted for? The answer is, that several of the states lying to the north in which slavery prevails, can no longer find profitable employment for their bondsmen in the cultivation of the former articles of export, owing to the deterioration of the soil

and have hence turned their attention to raising slaves for sale in the southern market. The number thus exported, principally from Virginia and Maryland, appears to amount to at least 60,000 annually. These states thus supply to the slave consumers in the more southerly part of the union, where the soil is yet new or unexhausted, a resort, similar to that for which the Cuban and Brazilian slave-holder repairs to the coast of Africa. Much suffering is hereby occasioned in the separation of the nearest ties of nature, and the banishment to regions in which the treatment of the slave is most severe, because slave labour is there the most valuable.

Slavery, in the United States, has the same demoralizing effect, both upon its victims and administrators, as in every other place in which it has existed, or yet exists. It has also the same deplorable effect in steeling the heart of the slave owner, and those who represent him: of this no other proof is required, than the existence of a law, and this law is not a dead letter, by which slaves who cannot be taken alive are liable to be destroyed for seizing that liberty which the constitution of the United States, in cruel mockery, declares to be the right of all men.

In Brazil, there are at least 2,000,000 slaves, whose cruel situation is thus described by a native of that country, in a work published in 1837, at

Rio de Janeiro, entitled, *Memoria Analytica a'cerca do Commercio d'escravos e a'cerca dos malles da escravidão domestica*, por F. L. C. B. "Atrocious punishments are common amongst us. Nevertheless, the false opinion is propagated that we are the best of slave masters. If we be the most merciful, what must others be! On the great sugar estates in the north of Brazil, it would horrify any humane person to witness the misery of the slaves, whose bodies, covered with wounds, sufficiently indicate the treatment, of which they are continually the victims. In the provinces of Paraham and Piaupy, with which we are particularly conversant, 'as novenas,' that is, whippings for nine successive days, is an ordinary punishment. The culprit is fastened to a cart, and there receives two or three hundred lashes; the mangled flesh is then cut, and cayenne pepper and salt are put into the wounds, under the pretence that this is needful to prevent gangrene and corruption. I know a man named Joao Alvarenga, in Piauby, who when he wished to get rid of a slave, ordered him a 'novenas,' and then exposed him in a sack to the burning sun, where the wretched victim was further beaten until he died. The punishment of the tourniquet, hand and neck stocks, thumb screws, iron stocks, and many other instruments of punishment, are common on our

plantations; and even in our cities they are not rare. It might be supposed, that we inherited all these instruments of torture, used in barbarous ages, and worthy only of tyrants and the inquisition; but it is not so. The art of torturing is much more advanced amongst us. To expose a slave for a whole night, tied to a stake, over an ants nest (as is customary in some provinces,) or on a cross to the stinging of musquitos, (as in Rio Grande de sul,) are refinements of barbarity peculiar to Brazil, and we are the best of masters!

A great mortality takes place among these wretched beings, as has been recently acknowledged by a committee of the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies, and which, probably, is not less than five per cent. annually. To repair the loss of labour thereby occasioned, and to enlarge the cultivation of the staple articles, coffee, sugar, and cotton; 60,000 negroes at the most moderate computation, are yearly introduced from Africa, involving all those horrors in that unhappy land, and those dreadful sufferings and deaths in the middle passage which have been described.

Spain possesses, in Cuba and Puerto Rico, it is believed, 750,000 slaves, a very large proportion of whom are employed in sugar cultivation.

In Cuba, as in Brazil, an illegal slave-trade is carried on to a great extent; the annual victims of

which are variously estimated at from 25,000 to 50,000

Notwithstanding this circumstance, it has been ignorantly and falsely imagined by some persons, that slavery in Cuba is a light evil. In the description which I shall give of it. I shall confine myself to the admissions of a recent apologist for this enormity, and a native of the island; the Countess Merlin.

“The slavery that he (the holy man of Chiapa,) introduced was a deplorable seed for the Havana; —having become a gigantic tree, it produces the bitter fruits of its origin. It is an inexhaustible source of sufferings, of grave responsibilities and fears, and also by the expense which it occasions, a principle of permanent ruin. The labour of the freeman not only would be a purer element of riches, but likewise more solid and more lucrative.

“In order to obtain this result (the abolition of slavery, without a shock, without injury, and simply by the act of individual emancipation,) it is requisite that an insane rashness, and the desire of gain, should not be more powerful than the true interests of the state, and the love of humanity; it is requisite, that the solemn treaty which prohibits the slave-trade should be complied with, and that there should not be barracoons of bozal negroes;*

* “A denomination given to uninstructed and as yet savage Africans.”

it is requisite that the governors should not authorize, by the presence of agents of police, the disembarkation of slave cargoes; and, finally, that the contraband trader in slaves should not pay the contribution of an ounce of gold for each negro that is introduced into the island.

“ Since the new prohibition of the trade, that is in the last five years, the governors have obtained a contribution of more than a million of ‘ hard dollars,’ an enormous sum, but which it is easy to explain, if we reflect that in this time there have been introduced into our colonies more than 100,000 slaves.

“ The cargoes of emancipated negroes, (emancipados,) were delivered to the governor, who divided them among various persons, receiving an ounce of gold for each. At the end of the first year, these negroes must be presented to the governor, who, after having ascertained that they have not learned a trade (that none learn,) delivers them to the same individual, and always for two years, so that their lot is precisely the same as that of the slaves, with the difference of being deprived of the care and protection of the master. Those who take charge of them, having no interest in their preservation, put them to the most painful labour, and not being permitted to liberate themselves from their slavery by money, it is in fact eternal.

“The number of slaves in the island, which in 1763, amounted to 60,000, was in 1791, 144,567, and in 1827, 311,051. The number of negroes has increased considerably until 1839, and I do not think I am mistaken in fixing it at 700,000.

“He (the master,) is prohibited from applying corporal punishment to the slave, except for grave faults; and in this case, the flogging is limited by the law. We feel a repugnance to this cruel condition; but it is absolutely necessary, and the negro accustomed to this severity from his birth in Africa, whether from habit, or because he does not feel the moral weight of his ignominy, does not regard it, except for its pain; thus his repugnance to work, and his idleness only yield to violence, which is much more shocking when applied to persons born in civilized countries, to whom ideas of dignity and affront have a signification.

“Their (the domestic slaves’) habitual idleness, the heat of the African blood, and the indolence which results from want of responsibility concerning their own lot, makes them contract the most irregular habits. They seldom marry—and why? The husband and wife may any day be sold to different masters, and their separation prove eternal; their children do not belong to them, and deprived of domestic felicity as well as of a community of interests, the ties of nature are

limited to those which morality and religion condemn.*

“The runaway slave prefers the solitary savannah: the tall and thick grass laced with the gigantic, ‘caña brava,’ a species of rush of enormous size which rises as high as fifty feet,—offers him a more secure asylum; or otherwise taking refuge in the mountains—he chooses his habitation in the virgin forests. There, protected by the impenetrable bulwarks of woods of a very high antiquity, he defies the authority of the master and the assassin teeth of the dog.” “Very soon hunger and despair oblige him to betake himself to the plains, preferring a vagabond life and its danger, to the yoke of labour. If the fugitive is forcibly apprehended, or runs away a second time, fetters are put upon him to increase the difficulty of a similar attempt, and justice has no bounds, (*no se mete en nada.*)

“The slaves employed in field labour, are all bozals, and can scarcely make themselves understood in our language; their work is pleasant and their physiognomy stupid.

“The period of the manufacture of sugar is the most severe; but at the same time that which is most desired; it is the time of mercy. The master is then among the slaves; listens to them; pardons them if they have merited any

* I am unwilling to give a verbal translation of this passage.

punishment and restrains the manager;—always stern and inexorable in his severity;—but the adversary most to be dreaded is the sub-manager, (driver,) a slave like the rest, and on this account unfeeling and cruel towards his companions, especially those who have belonged to a tribe at enmity with his own; he is then ferocious and implacable by a spirit of revenge.

“Notwithstanding the robust constitution of the negroes, they are sensible to atmospherical influences; heat and cold, are the occasion to them of sudden and serious indisposition of various kinds. The enumeration of the negroes that perish annually, whether from the sufferings which they are compelled to endure in the fraudulent transportation from Africa, or in other ways, would be curious and affecting. Observation has proved, that notwithstanding the dangers of the yellow fever, the mortality among the whites is much less than that of the negroes. Señor Saco estimates it at the rate of 10 per cent. annually, which, although it appears to be too great, is not an exaggeration.”

“If the Africans had only to contend with, the heat in Cuba, considering the similarity of the climate to their own, they would have a manifest advantage over white labourers; but various circumstances destroy this advantage. It is of little consequence, that the negroes are less incommoded by the heat

than the whites, if on arriving at the Havana they have to suffer other privations and other sufferings. Without speaking of the maladies which are peculiar to the negroes, and that require all the care of the master to preserve them, an innumerable multitude perish in the passage and in the barracoons, especially since the prohibition of the trade. Before this period, the slave ships were subjected to a severe supervision by the military police: the negroes were vaccinated on their arrival, care was taken of the sick, and if the complaint was contagious, they were placed under quarantine. These excellent measures obliged the captains to treat the negroes with more care, and the mortality was less considerable. But since the abolition of the trade, the contraband slave merchant thinking only of profiting by the danger to which he is exposed, crams into those moving dungeons as many wretched beings as they can hold; and after tedious days, and still more tedious nights, arrives in port with a small part of the cargo in a weak and exhausted state, dying, and often attacked with the plague. Thrown upon the coast, they are left without remedies, until infirmity and death put a period to their mortal existence."

The authoress subsequently gives some interesting instances of the devotion of slaves to their masters in those instances, in which they are kindly

treated. Such is slavery under the mild authority of Spanish law !

The French colonies contain about 260,000 slaves, and in most of them there was recently a decrease in this portion of the population. The following statistical table extracted from a well known French work entitled, *Annales Coloniales et Maritimes*, affords important information respecting the slave colonies of France in 1839.

	Males.	Females.	Total.	Marriages.	Births	Deaths	Decrease
Martinique	36,346	39,666	76,012	15	2303	2592	289
Guadeloupe	45,606	48,985	94,591	19	1857	1883	26
Cayenne...	8,523	7617	16,140	43	297	628	331
Bourbon ..	43,763	24,432	68,195	..	1001	2359	1358
Senegal....			10,098	..	—	—	—
	134,238	120,700	265,034	77	5458	7462	2004

“ Hence it is seen, that in the slave population of Martinique, the births are one in thirty-three ; deaths one in twenty-nine ; marriages one in 5066.

“ In Guadeloupe the births are one in fifty ; deaths one in fifty ; marriages one in 4978.

“ In Cayenne, the births are one in fifty-four ; deaths one in twenty-five ; marriages one in 375.

“ In Bourbon, the births are one in sixty-eight ; deaths one in twenty-nine ; marriages unknown.”

These statements afford a clear and undeniable evidence of the demoralizing, cruel, and murderous character of the slave system in the French colonies. The great disproportion of the sexes in Bourbon,

shows that the slave-trade has been recently carried on in that island, if it be not still continued.

Some cases of horrible barbarity, attended with loss of life to slaves, have very recently occurred in the French colonies; in which juries,—in accordance with the general practice in slave countries where white persons are accused of the ill treatment, however barbarous, of their bondsmen,—found the criminals not guilty. The publication of these instances of dreadful cruelty, accompanied by a denial of justice, has excited a general feeling of indignation in France. Yet these are only a small specimen of those enormities, by which the lives of thousands of the subjects of France are every year murdered in her distant dependencies.

The slave colonies of Holland contain so far as can be ascertained, about 60,000 bondsmen.

In Surinam the annual decrease in this portion of the population is estimated at from three to five per cent., and the number of slaves in the last twenty years has been reduced from 60,000 to 44,000, notwithstanding the surreptitious introduction of Africans during a portion of that period. In consequence of this decrease in the slave population, estates have been and still are abandoned from year to year for want of cultivators.

Attempts have been made to introduce in this colony, in a few instances, the simplest elements

of education, and pains have been taken to impart religious instruction; but these praiseworthy efforts have been productive of a very small amount of benefit owing to the almost insuperable difficulties opposed by the example and conduct of the administrators of the slave system.

Some information extracted from a work printed at Amsterdam in 1822, entitled, *Beschouwing von den Toestand der Surinaamsche Plantagieslaven*, by F. A. Kuhn, M. D.; will afford an interesting and affecting insight into the hardships and sufferings endured by the unhappy victims of avarice and oppression in that colony.

In this work a particular reference is made to those causes which injuriously affect the health of the slaves, and thereby contribute to the large mortality which has taken place. The author subsequently proposes certain improvements, by which he thinks the serious evils which are pointed out may be, at least, partially corrected. Unless I am mistaken, however, there is only one means which can be relied upon to effect this purpose to any considerable extent; and this consists in entrusting the negroes with the care for, and the supply of, their own wants, instead of confiding their health, happiness, and life to the proprietors and managers in the colony, a large proportion of whom, are rendered, by the baneful influence

of the system they administer, to a deplorable extent demoralized and cruel.

The first serious injury to the health of the negro, and which is stated to affect his posterity, consists in the dreadful sufferings endured by Africans in their passage from their native country, and the deterioration arising from the change of climate, provisions, and a variety of other causes.

On the subject of clothing, it is remarked, "From the nature of the climate, the wants with respect to clothing, are not great; it is, nevertheless, needful for the health of the negro, whose teeth chatter at a temperature below 70° of Fahrenheit, that he should be defended by clothing from the rain and the cold night air." An account is then given of the articles supplied yearly to the slaves by owners who are in good circumstances. It is added, "the negroes have not the satisfaction of receiving an annual supply on all plantations; on some not an article of clothing, is distributed in a space of two or three years."

The negro huts appear to be generally of a very indifferent description, and in most instances are composed of an extremely perishable material. They are also frequently ill placed, on low and damp ground, a circumstance which is the more injurious, because the floor is in most instances the bare earth.

In reference to labour, it is said, that "the negroes on cotton plantations seldom work more than eight hours in the four-and-twenty; those on coffee estates, about seven or eight hours, except at the time of picking, when, if the berry is abundant, the time is prolonged to fourteen and fifteen hours. On sugar estates, with mills worked by water or cattle, nine or ten hours are given out of crop time, and during crop by a division of the gangs, sixteen or seventeen hours (on an average) in the four-and-twenty are devoted to labour."

The following just and important observation occurs shortly after: "Nothing is more injurious in a hot country than after the labour of the day to enjoy no rest at night; even those who lead an idle life cannot sacrifice the night's repose without injurious consequences to health; how much more is this the case with those, who have passed the greatest part of the day in manual labour. On all plantations where the gangs are not sufficiently numerous to allow an interval of three or four nights' rest to succeed each night devoted to labour, a very great decrease takes place among the slaves, and such an one, as is at once obvious to the observer. The night's rest is indispensable to the negro; a truth, which daily experience confirms more and more."

An important part of the labour on plantations is

thus described. "The turning up of the ground is not performed with spades as with us, but with a tool, that is here called tjap, (a kind of hoe :) if the ground be properly worked, this tool must be thrown with force into the earth, especially when it is somewhat dry and hard, which occasions a violent shock to the chest, particularly to the women, (both sexes perform this work,) and this leads to diseases of the susceptible part thus injured."

I give a few other extracts, either verbatim or in substance, on subjects connected with the health and welfare of the slaves in Surinam. "Besides the loss of rest at night, the time spent at the mill is not without prejudicial influence on the health, in consequence of its being always open on two, if not on three sides. In this way the damp and cold night-air is freely admitted, which cannot but be injurious, especially to persons without clothing, in leading to those diseases which are the result of checked perspiration. The negroes are forbidden, when employed in feeding the mill with canes, to wear clothing on the upper part of the body, in order to guard against the danger of their dress becoming entangled in the machinery, and thus sustaining the most serious injuries. Accidents, however, sometimes occur owing to a neglect of the prescribed regulations, and the slaves giving way to sleep.

“The births among plantation negroes are few, and bear no proportion with the deaths which take place; it may be granted, that independently of any unfortunate events from the prevalence of sickness, a yearly decrease of from two and a-half to three per cent. takes place on the whole slave-population. There are a few estates, where not only the births equal the deaths, but sometimes exceed them. This, however, is an occurrence in which few proprietors can rejoice.

The negroes have no idea of marriage, and cannot have any, owing to the small amount of knowledge they possess. From hence it follows, that there is no strong tie by which their living together in a family manner is secured. There are, it is true, many negroes and negresses who are faithful to each other, and live together as man and wife. There are those, who even live thus during the whole of their lives and have children; but a great part of the plantation slaves are quite free from all such ties.

“The Europeans have, in too many instances, formed connexions with the most healthy and handsome negresses.” “Many Europeans, as a consequence of an immoral life, very often make a new choice, and a number of weak and idle vagabonds are thus added to the community.

Continual hard work, with want of wholesome

food, whereby the bodily strength is impaired, is mentioned among the causes of a decrease in the slave-population.

“Pregnant women on plantations are accustomed in the fifth or sixth month of their pregnancy, sometimes earlier, to inform the managers of their situation, who then lessens their work, that is, allows them to perform half the usual quantity, and entirely frees them from some kinds of toil. Since, however, so long as this information is not given, the full amount of labour must be accomplished; it is easy to imagine that many kinds of employment, as ground work, carrying burdens upon the head, and others which might be mentioned, may have, and indeed have, an injurious effect on many females in these circumstances.” “On other plantations, where the hands, from want of a sufficient number, cannot be spared, or where, from neglect of the true interest of the proprietor, pregnant women are not considered; children are regarded as a great burden. It is not remarkable that on such properties miscarriages are frequent.

“On many plantations, the negresses in the third month after their lying-in, and some even earlier, return again to field labour. The infants are carried on the back during work, in a piece of linen called by them *pandje*; the child hangs at the upper part

of the back, with the legs spread out, and must endure all the injury of exposure to the atmosphere. Many children from this cause become sick and die.

The sick houses on estates are in general wretched places, and rather calculated to occasion than to cure illness. On the best managed estates the sick are often neglected, owing to the insufficient number of medical men, and the inadequacy of their remuneration. In connexion with the subject of medical care, I find the following graphic and affecting description of a slave-manager of the "baser kind;" and such do not appear to be very few in number. "Thus far the medical man has visited patients on plantations where the managers were of orderly habits. He now comes to an estate, where the manager is one of those rough beings, destitute of any sense of decency, of whom too many are met with in various parts; a man who, notwithstanding he seldom sees the sun go down, in a sober state, owing to the practice of taking a small dram every ten or fifteen minutes from morning till night; still keeps the plantation in tolerable order. It is afternoon when the doctor arrives, who finds the manager in no good humour; by whom he is thus accosted, "Well Karon!" meaning Charon, (a vulgar term equivalent to scoundrel,) "are you there; I have not seen you for a long time?" The surgeon makes an

apology. "However it makes very little difference whether you come or not;" (I do not insert a coarse and objectionable word which appears to have been used in the original.) "You are only quacks; there was that negro Nero, with everlasting pain in the shoulders; you have been gulled ———; I have cured him quicker." "Indeed?" "And do you know with what?—with ropesend. I had a good hundred counted on his black skin by a first rate hand, and now he is every day in the field." "Yes, you understand the character of the negroes better than I do, from constant intercourse with them, but you know that this plan does not always succeed thus. Perhaps you have not forgotten the negress Diana, who, for a stomach-ache, got a licking "haustus" of this kind, in consequence of which she miscarried."

The manager here turns the conversation to the subject of a supply of spirits, medical men in the colony being, in many instances, dealers in provisions and strong drink, as well as dispensers of medicine. Enough has however been said, to shew the character of a description of persons, "of whom too many are yet to be found," entrusted with the custody of thousands of wretched slaves.

The delay which in some instances, takes place in obtaining medical help, is said to arise from a cause, "which it is to be wished should entirely cease.

This consists in reckoning, whether the slave, after the cost is paid, will be able to make good the interest of the money expended; or, whether the recovery of his health is worth the charge which must be incurred to effect it. In some instances in which my advice has been asked respecting the situation of certain sufferers, and the result has been, that an amputation or treatment which would require long attention, was requisite; the reply was, "No, Sir! the expense will run up too high; the negro is not worth so much to me: or, what shall I do with the negro when he has only one leg or one arm; I shall not be able to make any further use of him."

Slaves under these circumstances, accordingly, often fall into the hands of persons who have little or no medical or surgical skill, and whose only recommendation is, that their charge is small in those cases, in which, contrary to all probability, they succeed in effecting a cure.

Much more might have been added, were it needful, to prove the shameful neglect and suffering to which the slave is exposed, owing to the want of attention, or to the brutality and avarice of those who have the management of slaves in Surinam.

In the West India islands belonging to Denmark, there was, during a considerable number of

years, a large diminution in the slave population, which in the island of St. Croix, amounted to 7000, in a number of 26,000 in a period of seventeen years. It is now supposed that the population in the Danish West Indies, is nearly, or quite, stationary. This, however, is far from being a satisfactory result, as there ought to be, and would be, a large increase, but for the existence of those causes, so fatal to the multiplication of our species, which are everywhere seen to be the consequence of slavery. Efforts made for a very long period in these colonies, for the religious instruction of the negroes, have borne little fruit, although commenced under peculiarly interesting circumstances.

The small island of St. Bartholomew, under the rule of the king of Sweden, has greatly declined in population for many years past, and does not now contain more than 700 slaves. Small, however, as this number appears, and really is, compared with that of those countries of which I have hitherto spoken, it would be a matter of heart-felt rejoicing to the friends of the negro, if their deliverance were accomplished.

Slavery exists, although not to a large extent, in some of the South American republics, but little is generally known respecting its nature or the number of its victims. The same remark, with respect to numbers, may be applied to the state of Texas in

North America ; a solitary and melancholy instance of an addition to the list of slave holding countries. The slave code of this republic is not inferior in barbarity to the worst that can be cited.

The information which has been given, requires little comment. The physical condition of a large portion of the slaves is clearly indicated by the account of mortality ; for as Lord Brougham has well observed when speaking of British colonial slavery. " There cannot be a more appalling picture presented to the reflecting mind, than that of a people decreasing in numbers. To him who can look beyond the abstract numbers, whose eye is not confined to the mere tables and returns of population, but ranges over the miseries of which such a diminution is the infallible system ; it offers a view of all the forms of wretchedness, suffering in every shape, privations in unlimited measure, whatever is most contrary to the nature of human beings, most alien to their habits, most averse to their happiness and comfort, all beginning in slavery, the state most unnatural to man ; consummated through various channels in his degradation, and leading to one common end, the grave. Show me but the simple fact, that the people in any country are regularly decreasing, so as in half a century to be extinct ; and I want no other evidence, that their lot is that of the bitterest wretchedness ; nor will any other

facts convince me, that their general condition can be favourable or mild."

If it be further considered, that, not only in that immense slave population, scattered over various regions in which there is a large excess of deaths over births; but in those in which the number of the one is only equal to that of the other, there would be a very large increase, but for the existence of slavery, it will be perceived to what a dreadful extent the springs of life, and even life itself, are destroyed by this deadly system; more fatal to human existence than the desolating scourges of famine, pestilence, or the sword.

The effect of slavery in preventing the intellectual, moral, and religious improvement of those who are held in bondage, and which exercises an influence no less baneful on their oppressors, has been occasionally noticed. It is, indeed, a deplorable consequence of slavery, that wherever it is found, civilization makes little or no progress; morality is openly disregarded among all classes, to an extent wholly unknown in any other countries in which christianity is professed; and religion, in those instances in which there is any pretension to it, is in general only nominal, and disgraced by the commission of crimes utterly at variance with that love and holiness, which are taught by the example and precepts of our Redeemer.

It will be seen, from the statement that has been made, that there are considerably more than 5,000,000 of our fellow-men unjustly deprived of liberty, and exposed to the deepest degradation and suffering; and that in connexion with this stupendous wickedness, there exists a trade in human beings, by which, as has been observed in a former letter, 300,000 Africans are annually destroyed or enslaved.

I remain,

Your Friend,

G. W. ALEXANDER.

LETTER VII.

SUMMARY OF THE PRESENT STATE AND PROSPECTS
OF THE ANTI-SLAVERY QUESTION, AND PRACTICAL
REMARKS.

Lisbon, Fourth Month (April) 25th, 1842.

DEAR FRIENDS,

IN the preceding letters I have endeavoured to narrate some of the most important facts connected with the history of the slave-trade and slavery, and the progress and results of emancipation. It has I think, been established :

1st. That there is no probability of putting an end to the dreadful traffic in human beings, except by the universal abolition of slavery.

2nd. That slavery is alike wicked in its origin, unjust in principle, and demoralizing and cruel in practice.

3rd. That efforts for its amelioration are almost entirely futile.

4th. That any system, by which labour is compelled, and a fair recompense is not given, involves, in the language of Lord Howick, " the whole prin-

ciple of slavery ;" and prostitutes the authority of law, whose legitimate object is to protect the innocent, and to punish the guilty, by making its ministers the instruments of oppression ; the drivers of the old system, under a new form of bondage.

5th. That any measure short of freedom is, consequently, liable to a large part of those frightful evils inherent in a system of coerced labour.

6th. That the act of emancipation, which justice, humanity, and religion prescribe, is not only safe, but in the highest degree expedient, as the best means of promoting the happiness, peace, and welfare of a community.

Such appear to be the lessons of experience, bought at the expense of the happiness and lives of millions of wretched Africans and their descendants ; and which solemnly proclaim the duty, of seeking the immediate and entire abolition of slavery, wherever it exists.

In contemplating the importance of this work, it should be recollected ; that the slave-trade at a very recent period, has deprived of liberty and life a greater number of victims, than at any former time.

Africa continues to be scourged by wars and other crimes, to which this trade is the constant incentive.

A vast number of vessels are continually crossing

the Atlantic, crowded with wretched victims, of whom large numbers perish in the passage from the sufferings and privations which they endure.

In the western world, slavery still inflicts its degradation and miseries on more than five millions of our fellow-men.

In the efforts which may be made to remove these enormous evils, we may be cheered by reflecting upon how much has been already accomplished in the cause of freedom; notwithstanding so much remains to be done. We may also be instructed, by directing our attention to those measures which have been employed with the greatest success in advancing the cause of emancipation.

It will be found, that in the West Indies, where half a century since there was not an island exempt from the curse of slavery, the population in a great part of them is now entirely free. This remark applies both to the large island of Hayti, and to numerous colonies belonging to Great Britain. The number of inhabitants in these regions, in which emancipation has taken place, amounts to more than 1,500,000.

The northern portion of the United States, in which slavery was formerly tolerated, is also to a great extent inhabited by freemen, although unhappily confederated with oppressors: and in Mexico, where liberty has been universally established, no

less than 800,000 bondsmen were at one time liberated.

In many of the new governments in South America, the fetters of the slave have been generally, or with few exceptions, broken.

Emancipation has also taken place in the British dependencies of the Cape of Good Hope, and the island of Mauritius.

In addition to these facts, there is a moral feeling against slavery, extending every day throughout enlightened and professedly Christian countries, which will assuredly, ere long, exercise a powerful influence in promoting its universal downfall.

If it be inquired, to what means the abolition of the slave-trade and slavery in those regions in which they formerly existed, is to be attributed; the reply is, that it has been effected to a great extent by the influence of moral sentiment, directed by individuals, or associations of persons, deeply impressed with a sense of the duty and importance of terminating these great evils.

It is highly satisfactory to know, that a similar instrumentality is at present employed for the same purpose, more extensively than at any former period. In the free states of the North American Union, numerous societies are urging the right of the slave to freedom. France has a society to promote the abolition of slavery in her colonies,

among the members of which, are some of the most distinguished men of that country. In Holland, a deep interest in the cause of the slave has been awakened: and it may be further said, that in every country on the continent of Europe, possessing slave colonies, there are known and decided friends of the negro. Even in Brazil and Surinam, the cause of the slave has been openly advocated; and in Cuba, some (among those who possess freedom themselves) are to be found, who would gladly hasten the jubilee of emancipation. I must not omit to state, that England; once indeed deeply implicated in the crime of slave-trading and slavery, but subsequently distinguished for her efforts on behalf of the oppressed; has many associations, whose labours are directed to promote the abolition of slavery and the slave-trade throughout the world.

Among the means employed extensively, and with great advantage in the cause of abolition, is the press. This is now largely used in the United States of America and in Great Britain. Publications are also from time to time issued in France, and within a recent period the claims of the slave to freedom have been pleaded through the same medium in Brazil, Holland, Spain, and Sweden. It is, however, highly desirable that the press should be employed far more widely than has yet been the case, in countries implicated in the crime

of upholding slavery; and that a greater number of associations should exist for mutual encouragement, aid, and counsel in the arduous work of contending for the oppressed, amidst the difficulties arising from the indifference of too many to sufferings which are not their own, and the strenuous opposition of those who are participants in the wrongs which it is sought to remove.

It is satisfactory to reflect, that since the termination of the apprenticeship in our colonies, British abolitionists have visited nearly every country implicated in negro slavery, including France, Holland, Spain, Denmark, Sweden, the United States of America and Brazil. More than one visit has indeed been paid to some of these lands, and with all of them a written intercourse, more or less frequent, is maintained. England too has welcomed in her turn, the friends of the oppressed from distant lands, at a large meeting or convention, held in London in the summer of 1840; to receive information on the subject of slavery and the slave-trade, wherever they exist; and to devise the means by which, under the divine blessing, these gigantic evils might be universally abolished. On this occasion, delegates from the United States of America; from France; and from the British West Indies; a representative of Hayti; and a visitor from Spain; met, with British aboli-

tionists, assembled from all parts of the United Kingdom. It is believed that the information communicated and the steps taken, at this Convention; or which have been since adopted in compliance with its recommendation; have had a highly beneficial influence upon public opinion, and have not been unproductive of good in the most influential quarters. A similar meeting is to take place on the 13th of Sixth Month (June) in next year, when it is hoped a much larger number of delegates will be present from foreign countries, to manifest the greatly increased interest on the subject of slavery now felt in various lands, and to assist in its important deliberations.

In the use of the means, to which reference has been made for promoting, the abolition of the slave-trade and slavery, there is much reason to believe, that one of the most important works of the present day; in the promotion of which not a few of the great and good in the most enlightened countries of the world are already occupied; will be speedily consummated: and thereby the progress of civilization be greatly advanced; while happiness, peace, and a solid prosperity shall be spread over regions, at present the abodes of misery to a large portion of their inhabitants; and of fear, and the imminent peril of life and property, the natural fruits of oppression, to the smaller number.

Thus too will one of the deepest stains on the profession of christianity, and a most serious obstacle to its progress be removed ; and it will be more conspicuously seen than has been the case in these latter days, notwithstanding many works of love and piety among its devoted followers ; that it is indeed a religion which brings with it, wherever it really prevails, “glory to God in the highest, on earth peace and good-will to men.”

In the foregoing letters I have confined my remarks on slavery, almost exclusively to that bondage which has originated in the slave-trade from the coast of Africa. The long perpetration of the most enormous wrongs on the natives and descendants of that continent, by men who call themselves Christians, appears peculiarly to demand immediate measures for their removal and reparation as far as it is possible, by placing these deeply injured persons at once in possession of those rights which they have never forfeited.

Although for these reasons I have not alluded specifically to slavery in India, under the British rule, or that of the Portuguese ; or to the same system of wickedness, as it exists in various European settlements in Africa ; it may be proper, before I conclude this letter, to remark, that the abolitionists of England are earnestly intent on the termination of slavery universally ; and that

to promote its early extinction in British India, is a work which they regard as their paramount duty. This is a subject to which their efforts are at present stedfastly directed, and their former exertions may, I think, be regarded as a pledge that they will perform this duty. It is indeed my earnest hope and cheering belief, that neither they nor the friends of the slave in any other country, will rest from their arduous and important labours, until the cruel and unrighteous system of slavery, and the atrocious traffic in human beings, shall through the blessing of the Almighty, every where cease to exist.

I remain,

Your Friend,

G. W. ALEXANDER.

LETTER VIII.

REPLY TO OBJECTIONS TO EMANCIPATION OF THE
SLAVES IN THE SPANISH COLONIES.

Lisbon, Fifth Month (May) 16th, 1842.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

RECOLLECTING the objections which were advanced at Seville, to the emancipation of the slaves in the Spanish colonies, I proceed to answer them in such a manner, as my present engagements, and the want of documents at hand will permit. These inconveniences will be the less felt, because I intend to direct my remarks, chiefly to the general features and great moral considerations of the subject, rather than to enter into details, which would require lengthened argument and an extended illustration. I do not however doubt, that a more minute examination of the nature and results of slavery and freedom, might be rendered at once highly interesting and instructive ; and furnish additional evidence of the truth, that both nations and individuals, in acting upon the principles of moral equity, which require the abandonment of a system of coerced

labour, would thereby promote the economical and commercial interests of a country, as well as its peace, happiness, and security.

I shall insert the questions which were proposed to me, with a small alteration in the words, before each of the answers. I intend also to add a question, which will be placed second in order; the reply to which is designed to meet the objection felt by many well disposed, but timid persons, to immediate emancipation.

Question 1. Can the government, in granting simultaneously to the negro the enjoyment of civil and political rights, guarantee to its white subjects in the colonies their lives and property?

Answer. The safety of thus conferring freedom, appears to be established by the fact, that in every instance in which it has been effected by the authority of law, it has been attended with peaceful results. This was the case in the French West India colonies of Hayti and Guadeloupe, when the liberty of 400,000 slaves, which they contained, was decreed by the French convention in 1794. In 1829, the emancipation of 800,000 bondsmen in Mexico was accompanied with similar peaceful results. Lastly, the peaceful abolition of slavery in eighteen British colonies, containing 760,000 slaves, within the last few years, is a further and conclusive proof of the perfect safety of general emanci-

pation. The last mentioned circumstance derives, perhaps, additional value, from a consideration of the number of white and free coloured persons in these colonies, as compared with that of the slaves, which was nearly as follows, viz.; whites, 100,000; free coloured persons, 120,000; and slaves, 760,000.

I find it stated in R. de la Sagra's work on Cuba, that in 1827, the number of whites, free coloured persons, and slaves, in that island, were, respectively, 311,051, 106,494, and 286,942.

If the increase in the two former classes have taken place in the same ratio, as during the preceding period of ten years, they will now amount to about 410,000 whites and 118,000 free coloured persons. It is understood that owing to great and constant importations from Africa, the slave population has in the same time been swelled to 700,000. Supposing this computation to approach at all nearly to the truth, of which there can be but little doubt, it will be seen that the number of whites in Cuba bears a large proportion to that of the slaves; while in the British colonies, the former class did not greatly exceed one-eighth of those who were held in bondage. It also appears, that in Cuba the whole number of freemen, amounts to three-fourths of that of the slave population, while in the British colonies, it did not nearly amount to one-third part.

In Porto Rico the population is thus stated in returns made to the Spanish government, for 1836—whites, 188,869; mulattoes, free, 101,275; black, free, 25,124; slaves, 41,818; from which it appears, that the slaves in Porto Rico, did not, a few years since, amount to more than about one-seventh part of the population of that island.

With a knowledge of the facts that have been stated relative to emancipation, and the present circumstances of the Spanish colonies, there can be no reasonable anticipation of danger to the white inhabitants from the emancipation of the slaves in these possessions.

If, however, it should be urged as a pretext for the slave owner retaining his prey, that many of these victims of oppression have been recently imported, and are therefore less fit for freedom than those who have been long in an European colony; I reply, that this is to admit an extensive violation of all law; and it would be a monstrous and cruel injustice to adduce the consequences of such a fact, as a reason why freedom should not be conferred. The circumstance that great numbers of slaves are held as such without a legal tenure, should be regarded as another cogent argument for emancipation. These remarks, however, apply chiefly to the principle involved in the objection. It may be shown that on prudential grounds there is no vali-

dity in this objection. In the important island of Hayti, not only had extensive importations of Africans taken place, up to the period when the question of emancipation was agitated by the French convention ; but the same spirit which overthrew the former government of France, had led to attempts on the part of the free coloured people, not without a sanction from the parent state, to seize those rights which had been hitherto withheld from them. This led to acts of violence, in which the slaves were called to take a part, some on behalf of those of their own complexion, and others for their white masters. At the proclamation of liberty, however, under such circumstances as these, all was peace, and the island enjoyed a large measure of prosperity, until the fatal edict of 1802 arrived, by which it was sought, but in vain, to re-establish slavery.

The British island of Mauritius affords a more recent instance of freedom being simultaneously given to a large number of slaves, of whom more than one-half were imported Africans, owing to a shameful disregard of law in that colony. Mauritius however furnished no exception to the general peace and security which followed the introduction of freedom. In 1833, the number of slaves in Mauritius appears to have been 76,774, and the total population including whites and free coloured

persons, 101,469. If the white inhabitants be estimated at one-half of the whole free population, it will thus amount to between 12,000 and 13,000, being about one-sixth of the number of the slaves.

It may not be improper here to remark, that if a government have sufficient force to keep a population of slaves of any description in subjection, *a fortiori*, they can do this with a population comprising the same persons in a state of freedom; for enfranchisement does not increase the physical force of the negro, while it takes away one of the chief motives for rebellion. Enfranchisement does not mean exemption from the influence of legal authority. Every well constituted community has the right of punishing the promoters of disorder or violence. In being enfranchised, the accountability of the slave only passes from the arbitrary power of the owner, to the steady and equitable authority of the law. An executive appointed by the state has a more beneficial and powerful influence, both moral and physical, than the authority of the slave owner, and is far less likely to provoke to acts of insubordination.

I think, then, it must be admitted, that any idea of danger from the slaves of Cuba or Porto Rico, by granting to them their natural rights, is in the highest degree unreasonable.

It is proper to observe, that the reply which has

been given to the question under consideration, refers almost exclusively to personal and civil rights. In reference to political rights, the friends of the negro only demand that he shall be subject, when emancipated, to the same qualification as other citizens, whether these refer to intellectual attainments, pecuniary circumstances, or obedience to the law. Such an arrangement has been adopted in the British colonies, and has proved to be as safe as it is just.

Question 2. Is it not needful that the slave should be prepared for freedom, by training him to habits of industry, by instruction in the rudiments of knowledge, and by the inculcation of moral and religious duties?

Answer. It is not needful. Industry cannot indeed be reasonably expected, and will not be generally found to exist, so long as the just and adequate motive is not supplied, by the payment of wages. Consequently, slavery, which withholds this stimulus to exertion, has a natural tendency to produce the opposite effect. An indisposition to labour is the result of slavery, wherever this unjust and impolitic system prevails. Under freedom, it has been found, that the habit of indolence has been relinquished, with the paralyzing influence by which it was caused and fostered. That this is the case, was shown even during the

existence of slavery in the British colonies, by the extremely small number of free coloured persons, who from idleness or any other cause, became dependent upon eleemosynary aid. I copy the following statement on this subject from the *Anti-slavery Reporter*, vol. v. p. 65. "In returns laid before Parliament, in 1826, (see 353 of 1826,) it appeared, that while in Jamaica, where the white population amounted to only about 15,000, the paupers of that class were about 300; the paupers of the black and coloured classes, being the 'manumized,' whose population amounted to upwards of 40,000, were only about 150, being in the proportion of only one 'manumized' to six 'white' paupers; but in the amount of relief, only about one to twelve. Of the 'manumized' paupers, too, almost all, it would appear, had been the concubines or illegitimate children of deceased pauper and destitute whites."

In another part of the work from which the above is taken, in an article full of important fact and irresistible reasoning, entitled, "*The question calmly considered what will be the probable consequences, as affecting the public peace of the colonies and the well being of the slaves themselves, of the early and entire extinction of colonial slavery, by an act of the British Parliament,*" it is further stated, that the enfranchised population of Jamaica "are

daily increasing in number, in wealth, and in respectability."

Of Trinidad, in the same article, it is said: "There the free black and coloured population, being either emancipated slaves or their descendants, amount to at least 16,000 or 17,000, while the white population are not much more than a fifth part of that number, namely, 3500." "The official reports from the colony, signed by the treasurer of it, state that no funds have been raised there for the support of the poor, in short, that there is no pauperism in Trinidad."—"Again, can it with truth be affirmed, that this wide spread system of emancipation has tended to throw back the subjects of it into the barbarism from which they have emerged: on the contrary, the very opposite effects have followed. They are daily growing in number and wealth, in knowledge and respectability. Half the property of the colony is estimated to be in their hands; and they are advancing rapidly in all the arts of civil life."

In this island, it appears from a note to the article already cited, that a considerable body of free blacks was settled, "each of whom possessed an allotment of land of his own, which he cultivated, and on which he raised provisions and other articles for himself and his family, his wife and children aiding him in the work. A great part,

however, of the time of the men (the women attending to the domestic ménage) was freely given to labouring on the neighbouring plantations, on which they worked, not in general by the day, but by the piece."

An account equally satisfactory is given of the general good conduct and prosperity of the whole of the enfranchised population of the British West India colonies, amounting to 100,000 in number, whilst surrounded with the contaminating influences of slavery.

It is, however said, that among those who are manumitted, few or none apply themselves to field labour. This allegation which was, to a great extent, true during the period of slavery, (the free blacks noticed in Trinidad having been liberated before coming to the island,) was noticed by Lord Stanley, and a reply given, on his bringing in the bill for the abolition of slavery. "But they were told with an air of triumph, to look only at the manumitted negro; and they were asked to point out, if they could, twenty instances of manumitted slaves engaged in field labour. In reply to this objection, he would ask another question; were they able to produce him twenty instances of field negro slaves who had been manumitted? The fact was, that the manumitted slaves mostly belonged to one class, and that not the class of field labourers."

“ Within a period of ten years, commencing in 1817, there had been 14,163 slaves manumitted. Did they consist of field labourers? Hardly an instance could be produced of a field negro among the number. It could be proved, that manumissions occurred only among domestic slaves, mechanics, and tradesmen, and it was not extraordinary that few, if any cases, could be discovered of their applying themselves immediately on their manumission to the degrading and fatiguing occupations of field labour.”

During the apprenticeship, the testimony to the industry of the negro given by a Committee of the British House of Commons, was in the highest degree satisfactory, and is as follows: —“ In the evidence which they (the Committee) have received, they find abundant proof of the general good conduct of the apprentices, and of their willingness to work for wages wherever they are fairly and considerately treated by their employers. It is indeed fully proved, that the labour thus voluntarily performed by the negro is more effective than that which was obtained from him while in a state of slavery, or which is now given to his employer during the periods for which he is compelled to work as an apprentice.”

The industry of the negro since entire emancipation has taken place, is such as might have been

expected from the decisive character given in his favour during the apprenticeship. An evidence of this truth is afforded by the amount of the staple productions now raised in our colonies. Nearly two-thirds of the quantity which was equal in the time of slavery has been exported; notwithstanding the increased consumption of these articles by the emancipated negroes, the occurrence of unfavourable seasons, the difficulties occasioned by the unjust and impolitic conduct of the late slave masters, the decrease in the number of field labourers arising from deaths during slavery and the apprenticeship, and finally, the withdrawal from this employment of many women who are mothers of families, of children who are sent to school, of elderly and infirm persons, and of others who are able to procure more profitable employment.

A state of slavery is no less unfavourable to the intellectual and moral improvement of the slave than to habits of industry. It will be at once perceived, and the master knows well, that, subjected to mental culture, the negro, like any other of the human family becomes more sensible of his wrongs, less adapted for that brute-like state of passive submission which is required of him, and better qualified to avail himself of opportunities to secure his liberty. Hence the determined efforts of the planters in every

country to retain their bondsmen in ignorance, from which, so long as he is a slave, it is, in general, impossible to elevate him.

In accordance with these statements it has been found that in communities in which slavery exists, efforts for the improvement of the labouring population, find their chief reward among those who have been freed from the yoke. On this subject I again quote from the article to which I am so much indebted, in replying to the question under consideration: "it may be proper to ask, how it was that these 100,000 enfranchised slaves, now inhabiting our West Indian colonies, (who, as we have seen, have generally conducted themselves with propriety, and many of whom have recently been admitted to all the rights of British subjects,) were prepared for their enfranchisement. We hear much of the necessity of previously preparing the slaves for freedom. We are told they must be made Christians before they can cease to be slaves. We will not now stop to inquire, whether the true way to win them to Christianity be to keep them in slavery, instead of setting them a Christian example, by fulfilling that simple precept of the religion we would recommend, of acting towards them as we would wish them to act to us, that is, with justice and mercy, and thus restoring to them the personal liberty of which

they have been most cruelly and unchristianly deprived. We will not now stop to make this inquiry, however pertinent it may be; but will pass on to remark, that most assuredly, in the case of these 100,000 persons who have shown themselves so deserving of liberty, and so fit for it, there was no such preparation as is now assumed to be indispensable. Those who made *them* free, dreamt of nothing less than of christianizing before they manumized them; and indeed we have sufficient evidence that, in the West Indies, Christian slaves are rather objects of persecution than of special favour and encouragement. But, in truth, the enfranchised population of the West Indies, who have hitherto conducted themselves so well, were so far from receiving any preparatory instruction in religion and morals to fit them for freedom, that by much the greater part of them have owed that freedom to their being the objects or offspring of a licentious intercourse. We shall not be supposed, by this remark, to detract from the supreme importance of Christian instruction to the slave as well as to the free; but we are anxious to expose the hypocrisy of those, who, while violating every principle of christianity by holding their fellow-men in bondage, will clamour for the necessity of previous Christian instruction, to fit their wronged slaves for a freedom which they only desire, by this

stale pretext, to postpone for an indefinite period. In fact, it is among the very persons, who having been liberated from their personal bondage before they had received a particle of Christian instruction ; and having thus the time, which as slaves they had not, to attend to the hearing and reading of the word of God, that christianity is now most successfully winning its way. And by this we may be assured, that it is only when the fetters which bind the minds, still more than the bodies, of the hapless slaves shall be broken, that a rational hope can be entertained of the generally efficient reception of the gospel among them."

In accordance with the just sentiments and sound argument contained in this admirable passage, the emancipated negroes in our colonies, have already made astonishing progress in civilization, morality, and religion. The eager desire of parents who were lately slaves that their children should attend school, and the large number of young persons who avail themselves of this privilege, estimated by J. Candler, an intelligent and highly respectable recent visitor to Jamaica, at 25,000 in that island, is one of the cheering evidences of improvement. Another consists in a very great increase in the number of marriages. To these is to be added a very general respect for religion, and in many instances, a walk in consistency with its require-

ments. How striking is the contrast thus afforded, to the neglect of education, demoralization, and contempt of religion, common in slave countries ; and how clearly is it thus proved, that a preparation for freedom of the nature proposed in the question, is as needless, as it is impracticable and illusory !

Question 3. Will the mother-country be able to preserve her colonies if emancipation be granted considering the position of the European governments ?

Answer. By emancipation, a government secures to itself the allegiance and affection of a considerable portion of its subjects, hitherto bound to it by neither of these ties. Supposing the slave population of Cuba to amount to upwards of 700,000 as already mentioned, this large number of persons who are now regarded in the colony itself as domestic enemies, would be strongly attached to the mother-country, and the danger arising from foreign interference greatly lessened. To such an extent is the security of the British colonies considered to have been promoted by the act of emancipation, that one-half of the troops have been generally withdrawn from them subsequently to the period of entire freedom. This has taken place too, notwithstanding the far greater disproportion of the white to the free coloured and slave population in these colonies than in those of Spain.

Question 4. Has the government the right of abolishing slavery in its colonies, without indemnifying the possessors of slaves, who have obtained them under the protection of the law, and with its consent; and in what way can this indemnification be effected?

Answer. It is the duty of a government to abolish slavery, on account of its injustice and inhumanity. An action which is thus rendered of imperative obligation, on moral grounds, should not be made dependent upon its being accompanied with indemnification. That a government has in time past given its sanction to slavery, is no justification for the continuance of such a sanction, which ought therefore to be at once withdrawn.

This will, perhaps, be more evident, if it be considered, that it is the duty of a government to grant its protection and benefits, no less to the meanest than to the wealthiest of its subjects; and how inconsistent is it with such a conduct, to sacrifice to the supposed pecuniary interests of a "very small numerical minority"* of slave-holders, the dearest rights, the happiness, and the lives of "the great mass of the people."

How far pecuniary losses which may arise from the abolition of slavery, shall or shall not be reimbursed, may form a subject for separate considera-

* Lord Ripon, see p. 28.

tion. In treating upon this subject, I must protest against any measure which would countenance the atrocious pretension to a claim of property in human beings; a pretension, which is at variance with the nature and rights of man, and cannot be maintained or upheld, without a contravention of the most evident principles of justice, as well as of the spirit and precepts of the gospel. Upon this ground I feel a strong repugnance to speak of indemnification.

If, however, it could be shown after emancipation has taken place, that there were cases in which it had been attended with loss to individuals, it would not, I think, be improper for a government to consider such cases, and so far as its means might allow, to afford some relief.

My belief is that a very great mistake, prevails extensively on the subject of the pecuniary loss, which, it is supposed, may arise from emancipation. By some it is imagined, that this will be equal to the whole money value of the slaves liberated; and there are at this day planters, who state, as British planters formerly did, that even this would be inadequate, because the bestowal of liberty would render land, buildings, and machinery of no value, by introducing general disorder and idleness.

I will reply first to the claim for compensation to an amount equal to that of the present money value of the slave. This, I contend, to be highly unrea-

sonable, because the bondsman when liberated, will in general remain in the country to give his labour for a fair recompense and this will be found, unless all past experience be false, more beneficial to those who at present employ them, in the long run, than the extortion of toil by fear and punishment. It would be ridiculous to pretend, after the experience of years in many British colonies, that the slaves when emancipated will not work. It may indeed be said, that it is doubtful whether they will at first make so much sugar as they have lately done at a dreadful expense of suffering and life. There is, however, no reason to suppose, that this may not be done in the course of a few years, when the population is recruited by a natural increase. Should a temporary decrease in the introduction of sugar take place, it would probably be made good to a considerable extent, if not altogether, as it has been in the British colonies, by a corresponding rise in price. This might with the greater reason be anticipated, because there is much probability that the abolition of slavery in foreign lands would be the signal for the admission of their sugars, no longer stained with blood, to the largest and best market in the world for this article; for such is Great Britain at the present time.

If it be true, that the slave when emancipated, would give a reasonable amount of labour to

estates at moderate wages, not only would the land retain its present value, which is by no means great, owing to the immense capital swallowed up in the purchase of slaves, but it would be greatly enhanced, because money would be no longer required as heretofore to purchase human beings. The value of the slave would as a natural consequence, be transferred to the soil, and such has been the case to a very great extent in the British West Indies. In a very large proportion of instances, estates can now be sold for as large a sum as could formerly be obtained for them with the slaves attached. In towns also, a great increase has taken place in the value both of land and houses.

From the considerations which have been advanced, I conclude that there would be little, if any actual loss incurred as a consequence of emancipation, and therefore, that a very small sum would represent the whole injury sustained in the few instances in which it might occur. In a large number of cases, judging from what has taken place in the British colonies, West Indian proprietors would be greatly benefited by the change.

I have hitherto spoken of compensation to slave owners, for losses sustained, where the person who claims a right of property in his fellow-creatures, possesses the best title which can be alleged for such a pretension; that the slave was imported

from Africa at a time when the criminal traffic in men was legalized, or is the descendant of those who were thus introduced.

But it has been admitted, by a recent apologist for slavery, and the fact is notorious, that a very large proportion of the slaves in Cuba have not been obtained "under the protection of the law, and with its consent," but in direct violation of its enactments, and the same remark applies to a considerable extent to those in Porto Rico. Those who hold slaves thus obtained, who, it is well known are in general easily distinguished from those who have been long naturalized, deserve condign punishment, which might in part consist in a large fine to be paid to the persons who have been so grievously wronged. To speak of compensation in such instances to the wrong-doer is at once an abuse of language and of common sense. I have indeed heard it said, that the case of these slaves resembles that of goods which have been smuggled into a country, and the seizure of which, in the hands of every person possessing them after some lapse of time would be an act of hardship; but I would ask, are the dearest rights, the happiness, and the lives of hundreds of thousands of human beings of no higher value than common chattels, and the trespass of the law in one case to be compared in enormity to their infraction in the other. Thus,

then, compensation, for a very large number of the slaves, is disposed of, if the principle inferred in the query were admitted, from which I entirely dissent.

The mode of effecting emancipation, so long as the rights of the negroes are secured to them fully and without delay, is a consideration which belongs to the government and not to the advocate of emancipation.

Question 5.—Is emancipation consistent with the economical interests of the nation, supposing that the obstacles implied in these queries can be overcome?

Answer. Yes. One great economical advantage to the nation by the abolition of slavery, would be found in a large reduction of the existing military force, the maintenance of which to its present extent, it may be fairly presumed, would then no more be considered necessary than has been the case in the British colonies. The Spanish colonies would have the same great natural advantages which they now possess in the extraordinary fertility of the soil; and under judicious management, in a state of freedom, might continue to produce a very large amount of their present staple articles. In fertility and in the number of labourers they have even greater advantages than the most favoured British colonies, and would therefore be in a situation to attain results equally satisfactory in the maintenance and even-

tual extension of cultivation, while there is no doubt that an immense impetus would be given to the general commerce of those fine countries.

In reference to the alleged prosperity and commercial advantages of emancipation, Hayti is however, cited as affording a contrary result. It will therefore be proper here to refer to the past and present state of that island. On the occurrence of the intestine war, occasioned by the wicked attempt to re-establish slavery, the bulk of the population took a part in the struggle to retain their liberties, and were thereby diverted from habits of industry. This was of course unfavourable to their future character and circumstances, as was also the destruction, during the civil war, of the plantations and property of every description—a loss which will require a new influx of capital and many years of peace to restore. For a long period the Haytians retained their liberty by an uncertain tenure, and hence adopted a course of policy highly injurious to industry, commerce, and financial prosperity, by maintaining a large military establishment. It must also be borne in mind, that their trade was no longer fostered and encouraged by the consumers of the staple articles, but was on the contrary discouraged by the obstacles to which it was subjected, particularly by France and Great Britain. Besides this, the education, or neglect of education, of those

who now held the reins of government, had not qualified them to overcome these almost invincible difficulties, and to lay deep the foundations of national prosperity in the encouragement of industry, education, morality, and religion. With such disadvantages it is only remarkable, that they have paid the French government 64,500,000 francs by the produce of their labour, for losses sustained by the planters during the war of independence; and they have within a few years past, exported a large amount of coffee and other articles, amounting in value to about £1,000,000. sterling per annum.

When I compare further the circumstances of Cuba and St. Domingo, I acknowledge that I think there is much to reconcile the mind to commercial results of a character much less satisfactory than those which really exist in the latter island. The slave ship no longer haunts the shores of Hayti with its suffering cargoes; the population has been doubled since freedom has been established by a natural increase; and the whip of the slave-driver is no longer the atrocious instrument by which men and women are forced to toil. In Cuba there is indeed a larger trade, and how is it obtained? By the encouragement of the man-stealer about its coasts, to supply the waste of human life which is the consequence to slavery, and, by the degradation and

torture of more than half a million of human beings. In this way with the great advantage of a soil of almost unequalled fertility, the exports of Cuba have increased forty per cent. between 1830 and 1840. I pity that man, who is so dead to every feeling of humanity and duty, and to the honour of Spain, as to be willing that a system based upon such atrocities should continue, were the fallacious advantages which it promises to the guilty parties, a thousand times greater than its apologists, in their war against human nature, pretend. I rejoice in knowing that I do not write to one who entertains such ungenerous and unworthy sentiments, and that his deep interest in the sufferings of the slave is shared by others of his countrymen. When I consider to how great an extent the happiness and lives of nearly three quarters of a million of wretched slaves, and the welfare of Africa, are involved in the termination of slavery and the slave-trade in Cuba and Porto Rico, I cannot but earnestly desire, that many will be shortly found in Spain, to advocate the cause of the oppressed, both by word and writing, until it shall triumph in the public councils; notwithstanding the opposition of too many who are influenced by an ill understood personal interest, and of others, whose conduct is regulated by the no less mistaken fear of impairing the national resources and power, by a loss of the Spanish West India colonies; never

in reality secure to the crown of Spain, until slavery shall be abolished, and, thereby an ever ready instrument for insurrection, shall no longer exist.

I remain thy sincere friend,

G. W. ALEXANDER.

Note to Letter 8, p. 146.

FREE AND SLAVE LABOUR PRODUCE.

IN making the remark that the exports from the British West India colonies under freedom are about two-thirds of what they were during the period of slavery, I make a comparison between the average of the three years which preceded emancipation, which were fully as large as for many years previously, and the three first years of entire freedom. It has been stated in Letter 5, that these were respectively 3,841,157, and 2,396,719. It may, however, be said that this is a large decrease. The truth of such a remark is at once

granted, but it has, I think, been shown, that it has not arisen from misconduct on the part of the negroes.

If it could be fairly supposed, that this decrease were likely to continue, it ought not in my opinion to have the weight of a feather in delaying the act of emancipation. Have a few thousand planters a particle of right to deprive hundreds of thousands of their fellow-men of the means of improvement, of happiness, and of life itself, in order to maintain the cultivation of sugar in the West Indies at its fullest extent, or can it be justifiable in any people or rulers to lend themselves to this wickedness for the sake of such an object.

There is however much reason to suppose, as has been already said, that the exports from the British West Indies will increase; and in the present year it is confidently anticipated, that they will exceed those of the last by not less than from 200,000 to 300,000 cwts.

It may be interesting to insert a table of the exports of sugar and coffee from various countries within the last few years, extracted from the Companion to the British Almanac for 1841, in which I shall distinguish, by an asterisk those countries in which these articles are raised wholly or to a great extent by free labour.

SUGAR.	cwts.
British sugar colonies*	3,571,378
British India*	519,126
Danish West Indies	450,000
Dutch ditto	260,060
French sugar colonies	2,160,000
United States	900,000
Brazils, exact quantity of white not distinguished	2,400,000
Spanish West Indies	4,481,342
Java,* without distinction of quality ..	892,475
	<hr/> 15,634,381

COFFEE.	lbs.
Brazils	134,000,000
Cuba and Porto Rico	49,840,000
Java*	80,174,460
Hayti*	43,007,522
French Tropical Colonies	14,720,000
Venezuela and Columbia	11,544,024
Surinam	2,400,000
Mocha	5,500,000
Central America	897,540
British West Indies*	10,769,655
British India*	6,245,028
	<hr/> 359,098,229

The proportionate quantity raised by free labour

is not less favourable at the present time, and may serve to show that these tropical productions do not depend, for being raised, upon the toil of slaves. So far is this from being the case, that I believe there is a great probability, unless unforeseen circumstances prevent this desirable result, that their increased supply by voluntary labour will be one means of hastening the termination of colonial bondage, notwithstanding the advantage possessed by Brazil and Cuba, in the great fertility of their soil.

At the same time I would deprecate in the strongest manner, the admission of the sugar of these countries in the British market for reasons similar to those given by Lord Howick, during the existence of British colonial slavery, in his place in parliament in 1832, when supporting a motion of the government to the effect—"That in the rate of duties levied on the produce of the labour of slaves, such a distinction shall be made as will operate in favour of those colonies in which the resolutions of this house have been adopted, and the wishes of the government complied with." Lord Howick on this occasion made the following observations :—

“What is the motive for all the hardships which the slaves are liable to? Slavery is maintained chiefly for the purpose of raising sugar, and if we

admit the sugar raised by the labour of slaves on the same terms, whether or not the regulations are enforced which we think necessary for their protection and for the amelioration of their condition, are we not parties to the guilt of maintaining the system in all its barbarity?

“ This country has the clear right to disclaim all participation in such a system. I will not receive the labour of slaves unless you assure me that no cruelty is practised in raising it.

“ The negro now labours under the continual dread of the most severe bodily suffering. Any relaxation of the intensity of labour causes the lash immediately to be applied. By this means that degree of labour is obtained in our colonies, which is found to be so fearfully destructive to human life.”

The reasons here stated for giving a decided encouragement to the produce of colonies, in which ameliorative laws had been or should be passed, as compared with those which refused to enact them, must assuredly apply in a much stronger manner to the produce of free and that of slave labour; especially if it be considered that the latter is now known to be attended with much cruelty in every region in which it exists, and that in Brazil and Cuba this iniquity is associated with that of the slave-trade on a large scale.

It may however, be said, that the British government has a right to insist upon reforms at home or in our own colonies; but that it has not a similar right in reference to foreign lands. To this I reply, that I believe the duty of governments, and that of individuals, is the same with regard to the discouragement of crime, whether at home or abroad, so far as it is practicable. As individual Christians, or as assemblies of such, every man is our brother, and we are no more at liberty to be accessaries to robbery and murder, by the purchase of articles which have been obtained by these means, in Cuba or Brazil than in Jamaica or at our own doors; a sentiment which the British government long since appears to have adopted in reference to those nations which were implicated in the slave-trade, by instructing its representative, on two occasions, to endeavour to obtain on the part of the great European nations a resolution not to admit the produce of countries that should persist in the prosecution of the traffic in human beings.*

* For a more particular statement of this interesting and important fact, see "Some account of the trade in slaves from Africa, by James Bandinel," pp. 138, 139, and 171.